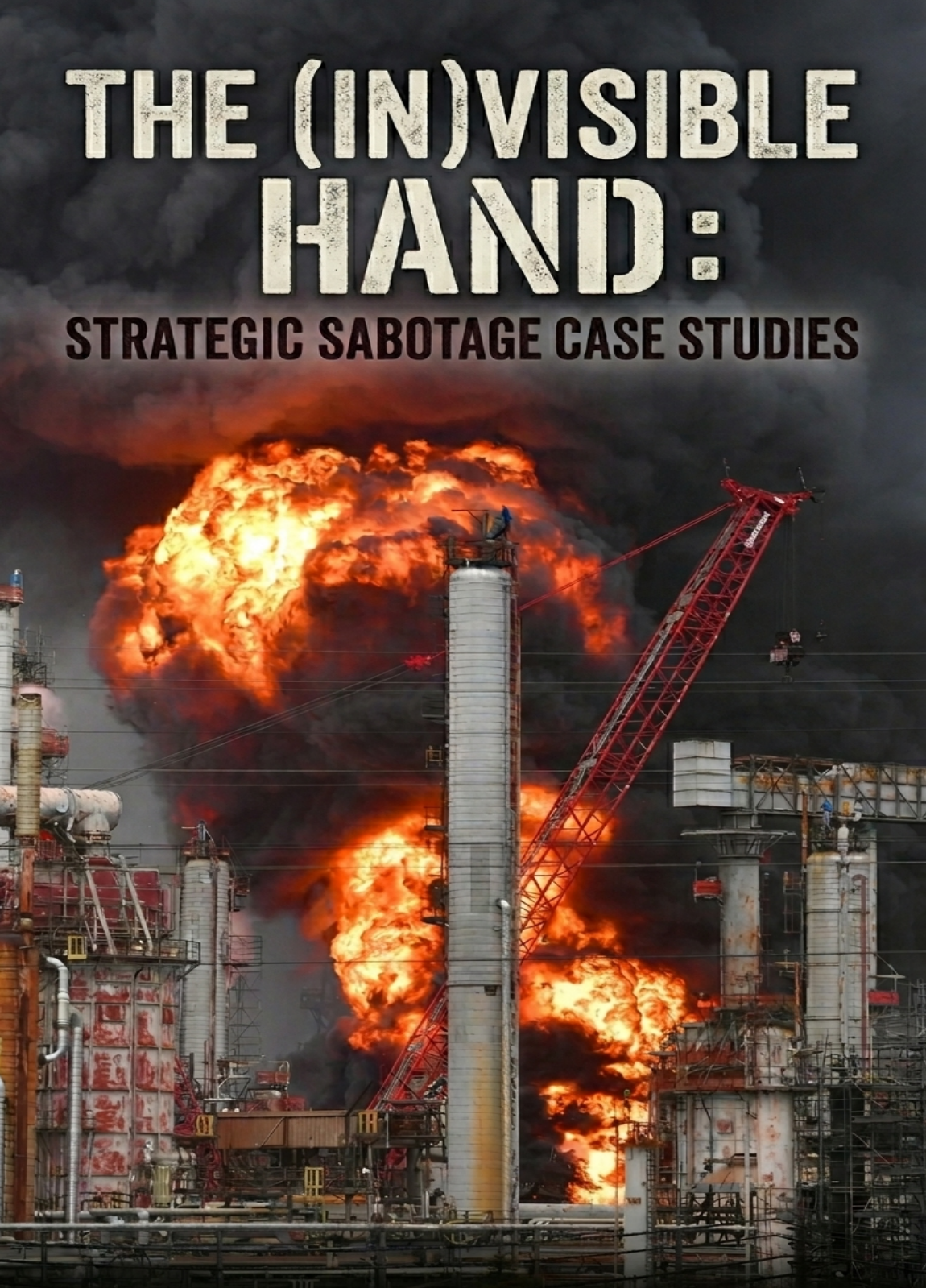
THE (IN)VISIBLE HAND:

STRATEGIC SABOTAGE CASE STUDIES



Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn, Dr. James D. Kiras,
Dr. Emily Spencer

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CASE STUDIES

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Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn,
Dr. James D. Kiras & Dr. Emily Spencer,
editors

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THE (IN)VISIBLE HAND: AN INTRODUCTION

Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn,
Dr. Emily Spencer, and Dr. James D. Kiras

As far as concepts go, sabotage is a fairly straighforward one. A scan of dictionary definitions provides a consistent litany of explanations, all with the common purpose to: "deliberately destroy, damage, or obstruct (something), especially for political or military advantage; to damage or destroy equipment, weapons, or buildings in order to prevent the success of an enemy or competitor; to intentionally damage or destroy something, for example equipment or a system, that belongs to someone else, so that it cannot be used; and to intentionally do something that stops someone from achieving what they want or stops something from developing as it should."[1] Similarly, Kevin Coleman, a cyber specialist, defines sabotage "as deliberate and malicious acts that result in the disruption of the normal processes and functions or the destruction or damage of equipment or information."[2]

Indeed, sabotage is not a new concept. In fact, it provides a viable method to strike at an opponent when other means are not available (or desirable), or as a complement to normal military operations, or other methodologies available to a state or non-state actor, to degrade and disrupt the enemy's ability to prosecute hostilities or achieve their respective objective(s).

In 1939, in preparation for a war that seemed inevitable, Major Colin Gubbins wrote the first "modern" British pamphlet on guerrilla operations, in which sabotage was a major component. He explained:

> Sabotage deals with the acts of individuals or small groups of people, which are carried out by stealth and not in conjunction with armed force. These undertakings, however, frequently produce very valuable results and, like military action, force the enemy to disperse his

strength in order to guard against them. The following examples of this type of work:

a. Jamming of railway points;

b. Destructive work on roads, railways, canals, telegraphs, etc., where this can be done by stealth;

c. Firing of stocks of petrol; burning garages, aeroplane hangars, etc;

d. Contamination of food, of forage, etc., by acid, by bacilli, poison, etc;

e. Contamination of petrol by water, sugar, etc;

f. Destruction of mails by burning, acids, etc;

g. Shooting of sentries; and

h. Stampeding of horses; and Use of time bombs in cars, trains, etc.[3]

The publication proved opportune as shortly thereafter the war commenced. Significantly, the Allies, who were left reeling after Germany's initial battlefield successes and their subsequent eviction from continental Europe, used sabotage as a multi-pronged tool to strike at the Axis war machine in the occupied territories. The Special Operations Executive (SOE), Office of Strategic Services (OSS), and Ministry of Economic Warfare (MEW), among others, were adept at using agents, guerrillas, and other methods in Occupied Europe to unleash a devastating program of sabotage and subversion that consistently chipped away at the German war machine.

In fact, the OSS later crafted its own guidance on sabotage explaining:

> Sabotage varies from highly technical coup de main acts that require detailed planning and the use of specially trained operatives, to innumerable simple acts which the ordinary individual citizen-saboteur can perform. ... Simple sabotage does not require specially prepared tools or equipment; it is executed by an ordinary citizen who may or may not act individually and without the necessity for active connection with an organized group; and it is carried out is such a way as to involve the minimum of danger of injury, detection, and reprisal.[4]

In the end, the Allied use of sabotage throughout the war was substantial. A simple snap-shot of SOE's "F" (France) Section for the period July-September 1943, shows the results of an active sabotage program. The SOE reported:

1. Members of the French Resistance, with SOE support, killed 650 German officers and men, wounded 4,000, destroyed 150 locomotives, 1,200 railway wagons and 170 lorries;
2. 445 attacks on Axis personnel or premises;
3. 171 train derailments and acts of railway sabotage;
4. 289 acts of incendiarism;
5. 219 acts of sabotage in factories or against public works;
6. 141 acts of subversion;
7. Destruction of the Lannemexan aluminum factory in July 1943 (as of end October only 50 per cent capacity restored);
8. Sinking of a minesweeper in Rouen;
9. The burning of 3,600 tires at Michelin works in Clermont-Ferrand; and
10. The destruction of 1,000,000 litres of aviation fuel and 10,000,000 litres of oil.[5]

Importantly, the above is a mere snapshot of a three-month period in only France in 1943. It does not include all the other Occupied Territories or the cumulative effect over the years of the constant, steady drain of sabotage on enemy troops, (both casualties and the need for manpower to secure infrastructure and routes), war materials, economic infrastructure and morale.

Moreover, sabotage was used to excellent effect during the invasion of Occupied Europe (D-Day) and the subsequent Normandy Campaign. For instance, on the coded announcement by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on the night of 5/6 June 1944, SOE supported Resistance cells conducted hundreds of sabotage attacks in preparation for the invasion. The French Forces of the Interior (FFI) cut the French railways at 950 points.[6] In total, there were 3,000 confirmed rail cuts in France and Belgium between 6 and 27 June 1944.[7]

One immediate impact of the acts of sabotage was to deny the Germans the ability to rapidly counter-attack. For example, the 2nd SS Panzer Division *Das Reich* was short of fuel due to the attacks on petrol dumps. As a result, it

turned to the railway but found the lines between Toulouse, where it was stationed, and the front-line cut. As a result, a normal three-day trip took 16 days. Similarly, the 11th Division took three days to move from the Eastern Front to the Rhine River. It then took three more weeks to travel the approximately 800 kilometres to reach Caen on the Normandy coast.[8] The Supreme Allied Headquarters later elaborated, "The widespread and continuous sabotage caused outside the capabilities of Allied air efforts ...it [sabotage] succeeded in imposing serious delays on all the German divisions moving to Normandy from the Mediterranean, and forced the enemy to extensive and intricate detours ... both main railway lines up the Rhone Valley were closed for a good part of the time, the route on the right bank at one time for ten consecutive days."[9]

Although sabotage during wartime is well-understood and documented, what is not as widely recognized is sabotage that is conducted by state and non-state actors to achieve national objectives during those murky periods between peace and outright war. Specifically, during that period that has come to be known as the Gray Zone, defined as "as competitive interactions among and within state and non-state actors that fall between the traditional war and peace duality. They are characterized by ambiguity about the nature of the conflict, opacity of the parties involved, or uncertainty about the relevant policy and legal frameworks."[10]

Gray Zone activities, specifically sabotage, has taken an even greater profile in the renewed era of Great Power Competition. The American *2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS)* was abundantly clear on the "pivot," or in other words, the transition from the Department of Defense's (DoD) primary focus on counter-terrorism and the "global war on terror" to a shift of emphasis on Great Power Competition with its "peer and near-peer" rivals (i.e. China, Russia) and international rogue states / competitors (e.g. Iran, Republic of North Korea)[11] Significantly, the strategy document explains:

> Today, we are emerging from a period of strategic atrophy, aware that our competitive military advantage has been eroding. We are facing increased global disorder, characterized by decline in the long-standing rules-based international order—creating a security environment more complex and volatile than any we have experienced in recent memory. Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security.[12]

It is this inter-state strategic competition, which must also include the impact of non-state entities capable of interfering with respective state actors' ability to achieve national objectives, that sets the stage for the importance of strategic sabotage, defined for the purposes of this volume as destructive or obstructive military, paramilitary, economic, informational and political actions carried out by a nation's agent or proxy to hinder an opponent's political objective(s) or to further one's own. Historically, as briefly indicated above, sabotage has always proven to be an effective tool to thwart an adversary's ability to achieve their desired political outcomes and / or diminish their war-fighting effectiveness. Whether conducted in an overt or clandestine manner, the scope and scale of, as well as the expectations for, sabotage is often a function of the state of conflict (or international competition).[13] In a total war context, such as WWII, attribution was normally of little concern. However, in "peacetime," periods of tension, or in the era of Great Power Competition, attribution becomes more of a concern. Nonetheless, the use of sabotage to derail a competitor's efforts and thereby potentially advance your own, becomes a powerful incentive to undertake such action.

Predictably, however, during periods of "peace," when diplomatic and economic cooperation exists, albeit at times greatly strained, simultaneously with competing national interests, the conduct of acts meant to destroy, diminish or thwart an adversary's political ambitions must be executed in a very clandestine manner. Nonetheless, nations still use strategic sabotage, as it is defined above, to frustrate, harass, and derail an opponent's policy or strategic objectives.

Although competitors such as China and Russia maintain large military forces and continue to improve and expand their arsenals, arguably leading to a renewed arms race, they remain careful to avoid actions that would possibly activate the conventional war "trip wire." Rather, they maintain the military capability as a substantial, viable and overt threat, but compete on various levels under the threshold of a "hot" or "shooting war." In fact, they utilize "hybrid warfare," defined by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as "a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures [...] employed in a highly integrated design."[14] A 2014, British Ministry of Defence report captured its essence lucidly. It asserted:

> Our adversaries are unlikely to engage us on our terms and will not fight solely against our conventional strengths. They will seek an asymmetric advantage and some will employ a wide range of war-fighting techniques, sometimes simultaneously in time, space and domain. Their logic will not necessarily be our logic and thus our ability to understand adversaries – and our ability to make them understand our intent – will be challenging...In some conflicts, we are likely to see concurrent inter-communal violence, terrorism, insurgency, pervasive criminality and widespread disorder. Tactics, techniques and technologies will continue to converge as adversaries rapidly adapt to seek advantage and influence, including through economic, financial, legal and diplomatic means. These forms of conflict are transcending our conventional understanding of what equates to irregular and regular military activity; the conflict paradigm has shifted and we must adapt our approaches if we are to succeed.[15]

In essence, the new competitive landscape, blends conventional, irregular, asymmetric, criminal and terrorist means and methods to achieve a political objective. Importantly, this combination generally makes the specifics of the opponent largely irrelevant. Whether a state or non-state actor, adversaries will make use of the proliferation of technology and information that has accompanied globalization. Instruments such as cyber warfare, economic coercion or even blackmail, exploitation of social / societal conflict in a target country and the waging of disinformation campaigns and psychological warfare are all in the inventory. Criminal behaviour and terrorism are also in the repertoire of opponents. General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation, distinctly articulated the application of this methodology of competing, (or more accurately great power competition/ conflict). He explained:

> Moscow is increasingly focusing on new forms of politically-focused operations in the future. In many ways this is an extension of what elsewhere I've called Russia's 'guerrilla geopolitics,' an appreciation of the fact that in a world shaped by an international order the Kremlin finds increasingly irksome and facing powers and alliances with greater raw military, political and economic power, new tactics are needed which focus on the enemy's weaknesses and avoid direct

> and overt confrontations. To be blunt, these are tactics that NATO–still, in the final analysis, an alliance designed to deter and resist a mass, tank-led Soviet invasion–finds hard to know how to handle.[16]

General Gerasimov markedly identified the weakness of modern states. He insisted that history has shown that "a perfectly thriving state can, in a matter of months and even days, be transformed into an arena of fierce armed conflict, become a victim of foreign intervention, and sink into a web of chaos, humanitarian catastrophe, and civil war."[17] This state of affairs is due, in his estimation, to the fact that "the role of nonmilitary means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness."[18]

In essence, rather than a kinetic solution to conflict, Gerasimov argues that the focused application of political, economic, informational, humanitarian, and other non-military measures, when applied in a coordinated manner with internal discontent and protest can wield significant results. In addition, all of these actions are also combined, at the right moment, normally to achieve final success, with concealed military action, often "under the guise of peacekeeping and crisis regulation." Gerasimov insisted, "Asymmetrical actions have come into widespread use, enabling the nullification of an enemy's advantages in armed conflict." He elaborated, "Among such actions are the use of special-operations forces and internal opposition to create a permanently operating front through the entire territory of the enemy state, as well as informational actions, devices, and means that are constantly being perfected."[19]

In fact, from a strategic perspective, the methodology of rivalry in the current age of Great Power Competition entails the mobilization of a wide range of a state's resources, primarily non-violent, to achieve a desired political end-state. In fact, the use of violence is not even remotely desired. Alternatively, a "hybrid warfare" approach is seen as a methodology of achieving the political end state without tripping the threshold of war, which would allow an opponent the recourse to legally use force and/or attract international intervention.[20] In fact, hybrid warfare creates a perfect ambiguity that paralyzes opponents since they are not even aware that they are under attack. The case of the Russian annexation of the Crimea and the conflict in Ukraine is a perfect

example. Russia was able to skillfully manipulate the U.S. and its NATO allies to remain largely passive while Russia dismembered the Ukraine.[21] It was so successful that the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Philip Breedlove, at the time, proclaimed that Russia's use of hybrid warfare in Eastern Ukraine represented, "the most amazing information warfare blitzkrieg we have ever seen in the history of information warfare."[22]

Consequently, the challenge is recognizing that Great Power Competition, as well as dealing with rivals and rogue states, is on a completely different playing field. Although conventional military capability will always be required, as both a deterrent and back-stop to military aggression, the majority of the never-ending competition/conflict will be waged on economic, informational, political, societal and technological planes. Within this context, strategic sabotage becomes an important contrivance. It becomes the methodology to frustrate, disrupt and deny opponent objectives and strategies. It also becomes a means, below the threshold of "hot" war, to compete in the international arena for the national interest. Not surprisingly, examples of strategic sabotage abound. For example: the Chinese use of cyber attacks; the purchase of Western key industries and natural resource producers, as well as entertainment outlets; the dumping of steel thus strangling Western steel producing capability; the building of foreign infrastructure and loaning of money to underdeveloped countries (e.g. the belt and road initiative) thus allowing economic dominance and control; and trade boycotts are all examples of how China subtly, and often not so subtly, is working to expand its influence, access and control in the international arena, while simultaneously trying to deny access, influence and economic opportunity to its competitors.[23]

The Russians are no different. The use of proxy forces in Libya, Syria and Africa; the use of state hackers and their cyber attacks on its former republics and international competitors; interference in U.S. elections; troll farms dispensing disinformation meant to create cleavages in the social fabric of target nations; the RT news agency; private military contractors and the use of "little green men" (SOF) to agitate, disrupt and divide opponents, all speak to their use of non-military means to reassert their position and gain advantage.

The West too is no different. It has a long history of orchestrating regime change; using economic power, sanctions and boycotts to cripple opponents

and competitors; funding, equipping and training proxies to oppose antagonists; using cyber attacks to strike opponent infrastructure and systems; and proxies and allies to achieve desired outcomes.

All of these examples speak to strategic sabotage. As such, this volume provides a plethora of case studies of strategic sabotage (both those that were successful and those that were not) to identify characteristics, best practices, challenges and effectiveness. The case studies span the period from World War II to the present and include a myriad of different players. They include cases of sabotage in wartime to thwart opponents, as well as to influence or frustrate neutral and Allied nations. The case studies also include operations in the Cold War and the Post 9/11 era. Importantly, the case studies are book-ended by a theory chapter on sabotage at the front end and an assessment of lessons, or perhaps more accurately, observations, stemming from an analysis of the case studies themselves at the back end. In sum, this volume sheds light on those unexplained, yet well understood, events that happen in the murky darkness of international affairs.

CHAPTER 1

CONCEPTUALIZING STRATEGIC SABOTAGE

Dr. Patricia Blocksome

"Sabotage, whether it be the calculated destruction of a nation's vital material resources or an insidious campaign which results in unrest, disunion and a breakdown of civilian morale, is a very vital and basic part of modern warfare."
Blayney Matthews, 1941[24]

Going back at least as far as Odysseus's Trojan Horse, sabotage is not a new phenomenon. Most explorations of sabotage, however, are focused on the recounting of historical events, rather than building a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon. This chapter seeks to conceptualize sabotage – to include strategic sabotage – and identify how military forces may best support it. This chapter first discusses what objects may be sabotaged, and then describes four defining elements of sabotage. The discussion then shifts to understanding who saboteurs are, and what roles military forces may play. Once sabotage and saboteurs are defined, the chapter concludes with a discussion of when and how sabotage may generate strategic effects.

The Object of Sabotage

The Oxford English Dictionary defines sabotage as "any disabling damage deliberately inflicted, esp. that carried out clandestinely in order to disrupt the economic or military resources of an enemy."[25] While this article develops a more detailed definition of strategic sabotage on the following pages, the above definition does identify the key feature of sabotage operations: deliberate damage.

The key requirement for sabotage is deliberate damage inflicted on an object of value to the adversary – harming an object of low value to the adversary is a futile waste of effort.[26] However, it is important to note that this damage is not limited to a physical object. As with other military operations, sabotage can be directed toward objects in the physical, cyber, or psychosocial domains.

Physical sabotage is perhaps the easiest domain to understand; when objects of value to the enemy are physically destroyed or rendered unusable.[27] In the cyber domain, no physical destruction may occur, but computer systems may be manipulated in order to disable, disrupt, or alter networks, communications, data, or information. Sabotage may also be directed at individuals, groups, or a society as a whole, with the intent of degrading an adversary's will to fight, or sowing doubts in order to delegitimize leaders or fracture social trust.[28] Such psychological sabotage operations are focused on the beliefs and perceptions that people hold in their minds.[29] It is important to note there may be overlap between these categories. Physical destruction may be done in the hopes of causing psychological harm, or a cyber sabotage attack may lead to the malfunctioning of physical equipment.

Regardless of domain, the saboteur will seek to deliberately inflict harm on a valued object. Such harm is not the only requirement, though, for something to be considered an act of sabotage. Many other military activities could also be described as inflicting harm on an object. The following section describes several other elements that help clarify the concept of sabotage.

Elements of Sabotage

Before delving into a discussion about the strategic nature of sabotage operations, the concept of sabotage itself must be explored. Sabotage is a distinct type of hostile action taken against an adversary, occurring in either peace or wartime, and an act of sabotage can be identified by the following elements: destruction, location, secrecy, and economy of force.

DESTRUCTION

Regardless if it is carried out during a time or war or a time of peace, sabotage is a hostile action, taken to in some way harm an object that is of value to the adversary. That harm can take on many forms, to include degradation or

outright destruction of the object. In order for this destruction to be harmful to the adversary, the object itself must have some value to them. As Harvey J. McGeorge and Christine Ketcham point out, "The value of a sabotage mission is often directly proportional to the extent of the destruction achieved."[30] The object, however, does not actually need to be harmed itself. Sabotage that leads to distrust or denial of access can also cause harm to an adversary even if the object itself is undamaged. It may be enough for the adversary to know that a valued object is at risk of harm. In this type of situation, the saboteurs must ensure the adversary knows of the threat of harm, as it is this knowledge that will produce the desired effect of the operation. The term destruction, as it is used in this paper, refers to harm caused to an adversary in relation to a valued object, whether or not the object itself is damaged.

LOCATION

Sabotage occurs not in an area where hostilities are ongoing, but in the adversary's "deep" or rear area. The goal of sabotage is to harm or destroy an adversary's valued object, in a way, a time, or a place where the adversary did not know that it would be at risk. For example, an adversary knows that its troops are at risk when they are on the front lines. However, it would be an act of sabotage to destroy those troops when they are not on the front lines, not in a known area of conflict. This abstract example illustrates the difference between sabotage and other military activity: opening fire on a military unit on the front lines where risk is expected and exploding a munition that destroys the troop transit vehicle as those troops are moving between two headquarters in the rear area where it is not.

SECRECY

The requirement for clandestine action is inherent in the nature of sabotage operations. Should operations be known in advance, it would almost certainly lead to mission failure. This requirement is particularly true given the location of sabotage operations in an adversary's rear area, where adversarial capabilities and personnel are easily available to be tasked with counter-sabotage missions. Some operations are only clandestine until the sabotage action itself is taken; certainly, with physical destruction of an object, the results will soon become known to the adversary. Other operations may remain shrouded in secrecy well after the sabotage has taken place. For example, a successfully

compromised, slowly degraded computer network may take months to be discovered by the adversary. Such secrecy is where the dividing line between sabotage and steady-state intelligence gathering activities may become blurred. The concept of sabotage, however, requires some form of harm to occur. Intelligence-gathering activities, in contrast, typically seek to continue to access information from a comprised computer system without raising suspicions or harming the system. Thus, an intelligence operation would seek continued access to information, while operations focused on destruction, obstruction, or fear of harm to the system would be classified as sabotage.[31]

ECONOMY OF FORCE

While the resources used to carry out a sabotage operation are not necessarily minimal, typically sabotage operations are conceived as an economy of force mission. Instead of using overwhelming masses of personnel or firepower to cause destruction to a valued object, the clandestine nature of sabotage operations means that smaller groups, or individuals, are responsible for generating the harm to the object. But if the object is of value to the adversary, why would you not commit large resources? There are three potential reasons.

First, there is a risk-reward calculation. The object may be of value, but not of enough value to divert resources from other areas. There may be a benefit to be gained from harming the valued object, but that benefit has to be weighed against the resources and personnel required to carry out the sabotage. The second reason is that odds of success may actually be better for a small, secret mission than a large one whose profile or footprint is well broadcast. If you know what your adversary is targeting, you are much more likely to protect it adequately. Small, targeted strikes may have a better chance of success than large obvious commitments of troops.[32] Finally, for politically sensitive operations, where mission failure might bring with it severe risk or threat of response, a small group of individuals may be much more plausibly deniable.[33] For all of these reasons, sabotage operations tend to be economy of force missions. In times of war, they are generally complementary to the objectives pursued by conventional forces. In times of peace, or at least the absence of declared hostilities, sabotage operations offer a way to harm an adversary's valued objects with a lessened risk of escalation.[34]

Combined, these four elements – destruction, location, secrecy, and economy of force – can be used to develop a definition of sabotage: taken against an adversary, sabotage is a clandestine, economy of force action occurring in an enemy's rear area that seeks to damage a valuable object.[35]

Strategic Saboteurs

The above description of sabotage does not define the personnel who serve as saboteurs. Most saboteurs fall into one of four types: technical experts; politically-motivated individuals or groups (e.g., resistance movements); intelligence operatives; and, military forces.[36] Though each type of saboteur can carry out an act of sabotage by themselves, it is not uncommon for different types to come together to draw from their respective strengths.

Technical expertise related to the object of value is a common requirement of sabotage operations.[37] Technical experts will not necessarily lead sabotage operations, but they are likely to be vital in the execution of the mission.[38] Because of this, identifying needed technical experts and bringing them into the process will be an ongoing part of sabotage operations. Other than technical experts, however, the type of saboteur is likely to vary with the geostrategic environment.

In times of peace, or in adversarial relationships short of overt conflict, acts of sabotage are more likely to require covertness. The sponsor of the sabotage may wish to remain as anonymous as possible following the action, in order to prevent or minimize the escalation of hostilities. In these circumstances, intelligence agencies, which focus upon covert action missions, will probably be the main sponsor of sabotage activities.[39] Given the "hidden hand" nature of covert operations, an intelligence agency may plan and carry out a sabotage action using its operatives. That agency's preference, however, is probably to hand off any actual physical operation to a deniable operative, such as a local recruit that has access or placement in relation to the object.

In situations of open conflict or war, and given acts of sabotage will still require a clandestine focus to prevent an adversary from knowing the objective and operatives, once the sabotage mission has been successfully completed the adversary will know – or at least have a strong suspicion – of who was responsible for the action. Therefore, while intelligence agencies may

still sponsor sabotage actions, the military may also be more involved in sponsoring and planning sabotage operations. Cooperation between intelligence and military communities becomes critical at this point, to ensure coordination, deconfliction, and unity of effort.

If military forces will be utilized in sabotage missions, their involvement may occur in two ways. For the most tactically and technically difficult missions, special operations forces can themselves be tasked as the saboteurs. Certain special operations units can focus on specific sabotage missions, and dedicate time, training, and resources to achieving them. Given the usually limited number of missions that would require this level of military expertise, and the limited numbers of specially trained military personnel, military forces may be more widely and effectively used as trainers of saboteurs, building up and resourcing extensive clandestine networks.[40]

Military Forces and Sabotage

Military forces have multiple roles they can play with regards to sabotage operations. If sabotage activities are occurring within a theatre of other ongoing military operations, coordination efforts will be pivotal. When developing sabotage operations, the military can provide intelligence assessments, planning, and resources. Military personnel can also build relationships and provide training for civilian saboteurs.

INCORPORATING SABOTAGE OPERATIONS INTO MILITARY CAMPAIGNS

An area where militaries generally possess an advantage over other government agencies is in the depth of their ability to plan and draw upon more abundant resources. Military personnel are explicitly taught how to plan and resource operations and defence ministries typically oversee unique capabilities and a budget from which they can fund operations. Both planning and resourcing are mission-critical elements for successful sabotage operations.[41]

In addition to the planning requirements for the sabotage operation itself, higher-level planning may also be necessary to ensure that sabotage efforts are developed in coordination with other military operations. Sabotage may be an economy of force mission in a lower-priority theatre, or it may be used

as part of a larger campaign, in conjunction with simultaneously occurring conventional military operations.[42]

Regardless of how or when it is used, in order to be effective, sabotage operations must be tied into the larger military or state strategy. The harm inflicted by the sabotage operation must also need to be weighed against any hindrances it might cause to other military operations. Especially during wartime, "The basic sabotage plan must determine in advance the extent to which a country is to be sabotaged. All such plans must be prepared on a long-range basis, the planners bearing in mind that indiscriminate destruction is bound to interfere seriously with postwar reconstruction and, during the war, with one's own operations in sabotaged areas."[43] The use of sabotage operations will also have to be weighed with other military approaches available to harm targets in an adversary's rear area. When compared to sabotage operations, deep strikes via conventional combat capabilities may offer both advantages and disadvantages in areas such as planning simplicity, escalation risk, or desired psychological effect.

ASSESSING, PLANNING, AND RESOURCING SABOTAGE OPERATIONS

If sabotage operations are to be successful, they first require the identification of a valued object that is vulnerable to attack. Intelligence assessments are therefore critical to a successful plan.[44] These assessments, generated either within the military or received from the intelligence community, must first identify objects of value to the adversary, and then also inform how, when, and where those objects are most vulnerable to harm. Assessment criteria could include how critical the object is to the adversary; how easy it is to replace; how access to the object can be gained; and what type and degree of harm against the object is sought.[45]

Once this assessment is complete, sabotage planning must then identify and emplace the right resources and personnel in the right place at the right time to successfully execute the mission. Clandestine infiltration, exfiltration, and communications tend to play a major role; this is a skill and resource set that most military special operations forces already possess.[46] The destruction of the object will itself require resources; the type of resource will depend on the location of the object, ranging from munitions targeting physical objects,

malicious code targeting cyber systems, or information operations designed to target psychosocial beliefs. Other skills, resources, and personnel will be specific to the nature of the proposed sabotage operation.

RELATIONSHIPS

If military forces are serving as liaisons or trainers to other saboteurs, then relationship-building and persuasion will be mission critical skills. This is a particularly vital requirement when working with volunteer saboteurs who are citizens of other countries: "In order to be effective, they have to be organized, directed, and supplied from abroad. Material aid is of prime importance, but political and diplomatic direction is also necessary. Consequently, liaison is a vital function of all sabotage organizations, not merely to sustain sabotage groups in the file and to supply them with whatever equipment and tools are needed, but also to provide them with polices, strategic directives, and tactical guidance. This is necessary in order to integrate them into the greater strategic aim which sabotage, on whatever scale it may be conducted, must ultimately serve."[47]

This training role has several benefits. First, by training recruits local to the area in which sabotage activities to be undertaken, the ability to blend in and understand the local environment is greatly increased, which may increase mission success rates.[48] The increased understanding of the local environment also benefits the trainers, and their organizations, as this should help to tailor missions that are will be effective. Next, having military forces serve as trainers also means an increase in the number of sabotage operatives. Instead of having a few very highly trained individuals available for a limited number of missions, the number of operatives and number of potential sabotage activities increases. The number of available saboteurs may be especially vital for strategies of attrition, as the number of sabotage operations might otherwise outstrip the number of saboteurs. As one World War II manual explains: "Acts of simple sabotage, multiplied by thousands of citizen-saboteurs, can be an effective weapon against the enemy. ...Occurring on a wide scale, simple sabotage will be a constant and tangible drag on the war effort of the enemy."[49]

Finally, military forces who are serving as trainers are also well-placed to build personal relationships with their trainees and with technical experts.

For trainees, such relationships may help in the transmission of orders or requests from military headquarters. This communication and coordination role is particularly critical when working with operatives who do not necessarily feel bound to take orders, such as recruits from a local resistance organization. Building relationships with technical experts, both within and outside of the force, enables military forces to be able to provide the right expertise for any operations requiring technical specialization.

When is Sabotage Strategic?

Not all sabotage is strategic, nor need it be. Some sabotage operations may only have tactical or operational effects, and as long as they support a larger strategy, they can still be a valuable contribution. In order for sabotage to become strategic, it must have an effect that alters the adversary's strategy.

Generally speaking, strategy is a plan to achieve political or military objectives, comprised of operations such as campaigns and "purposefully linked military engagements."[50] These operations, in turn, are built upon tactical actions, such as specific battles or sabotage actions.[51] An act of sabotage can be understood as a specific tactical action, such as destroying a bridge. A campaign of sabotage, then, would include multiple acts, a "combination of the pieces."[52] The goal of such a campaign would be to achieve, in part or whole, the objectives of the strategy.

For a more detailed understanding of how sabotage can cause such strategic effects, a brief description of strategy is in order. Using the model developed by Art Lykke, strategy is comprised of four parts: ends, ways, means, and risk. Ends, ways, and means must be in a balanced relationship in order to mitigate risk to the strategy.[53] Strategic calculus is the determination of adequate means (resources), to be used in appropriate ways, in order to achieve your ends (objectives). According to Harry Yarger, these means "can be tangible or intangible. Examples of tangible means include forces, people, equipment, money, and facilities. Intangible resources include things like "will," courage, or intellect."[54] This definition of means is quite similar to the discussion at the beginning of this chapter, which noted that sabotage is focused on harm to a physical, cyber, or psychological object of value. It follows, then, that the valued object in strategic sabotage operations correlates to the means, or resources,

of strategy. Thus a successfully executed strategic sabotage operation would result in change to the strategic calculus of the relationship by changing the means available to an adversary.

There are two ways that sabotage can provide such a strategic effect: decisively and cumulatively.[55] A decisive strategic effect is the knockout blow to a specific strategic objective or critical vulnerability. The term "strategic sabotage" often connotes or is interpreted as a single decisive action. For a single action to be strategic, however, the object to be harmed must be very highly valued and hard to replace. Such an action could be the complete destruction of a resource upon which the adversary's strategy is dependent. In such a case, a specific tactical action could have a strategic effect.

Unique actions against unique objects are not the only way that sabotage can have an effect. Strategic effect can also occur due to the cumulative impact of several smaller acts of sabotage. Each act, in isolation, may not be enough to cause a shift in strategy, but the weight of relentless small acts of tactical or operational sabotage can combine to serve as a death by a thousand cuts. This cumulative strategic effect is philosophically similar to war by attrition. It may take a longer campaign to achieve, but may also offer an overall greater level of harm to an adversary than a single decisive blow. In this case, the strategic effect is generated by the weight of multiple tactical acts of sabotage that combine to cause harm to an adversary's resource(s).

Whether decisive or cumulative strategic effect is sought, ultimately, if the measure of "strategic" sabotage is a change in strategy following the act of sabotage then it may only be defined as such in retrospect.[56] While this complicates matters, it does not make the process of planning for strategic sabotage hopeless. Rather, planners of sabotage operations should seek a deep understanding of adversarial strategy, particularly those resources that are essential to strategic aims, to determine what objects have enough value to the adversary's strategy that their destruction would cause a change to an adversary's strategic calculus. Though this will not ensure a strategic sabotage, it may well increase the probability of success.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to develop a more holistic conceptualization of strategic sabotage. Taken against an adversary, sabotage is a clandestine, economy of force action occurring in an enemy's rear area that seeks to damage a physical, cyber, or psychologically valuable object. The saboteurs who carry out these actions are of multiple types, ranging from technical experts and politically motivated personnel to intelligence operatives and military forces. Military forces, in particular, may have a large role to play in the development of sabotage operations in wartime, where they can provide assessments, planning, and resourcing for sabotage operations, as well as building strong relationships via liaison and training to partner saboteurs.

Not all sabotage operations have strategic effects. Some, however, can create such effects by altering the adversary's strategy by causing significant harm to critical resources or means. In the ends, ways, and means strategy construct, sabotage becomes strategic when the means are so strongly affected that the adversary must ultimately alter their strategic ends. Sabotage may provide this harmful effect on the means through a decisive blow, or via an accumulation of smaller actions. Either way, the strategic effect of sabotage may be hard to discern in advance, and may only determined after the fact.

CHAPTER 2

SCUPPERING THE NAZIS: SOE OPERATIONS IN THE AMERICAS

Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn

During the entirety of World War II (WWII) antagonists fought an overt and clandestine war. The surreptitious conflict was waged in the shadows, often to gain access to neutral and unaligned states and to deny the same to the enemy. The stakes were high, although one had to be careful not to be seen impinging on a country's sovereignty. Countries not actively in the war represented potential allies, safe harbours and access to raw materials, fuel and desperately needed equipment and material. As such, strategic sabotage became an important tool to gain advantage.

For the British this struggle was largely conducted by the Special Operations Executive (SOE), which was a British secret service organization intended to promote sabotage and subversion, as well as covert intelligence gathering, in enemy occupied territory. Prime Minister Winston Churchill created the SOE in July 1940, in the aftermath of the disastrous retreat from Dunkirk as England braced itself for the seemingly inevitable invasion. It was designed as a "full scale secret service, the mere existence of which could not be admitted either to Parliament or to the press."[57] The SOE became responsible for "all operations of sabotage, secret subversive propaganda, the encouragement of civil resistance in occupied areas, the stirring up of insurrection, strikes, etc., in Germany or areas occupied by her."[58]

Importantly, its mandate spoke directly to strategic sabotage. And, particularly at the beginning of the war, for the British, strategic sabotage became critically important. Hard pressed, Prime Minister Churchill desperately needed the United States to come on side, to provide its massive manpower and resource capability to the Allied cause. In addition, Britain also relied on the South

American states to continue to supply war materials to the Allies and deny the same to the Axis powers. Therefore, Churchill required the SOE to undertake an aggressive, yet clandestine, program to cultivate support in the Americas, while destroying Nazi ambitions in neutral and German-friendly states.

A Trusted Agent

To achieve this British intent, Churchill recruited a Canadian to run Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) and SOE operations in the Americas. His trusted agent was Sir William Stephenson, a forty-five-year-old businessman. Stephenson was a World War I fighter pilot who won both the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Military Cross. After the war Stephenson became a successful entrepreneur and businessman. His time studying the application of radio netted great results as he invented a means of publishing photographs for newspapers by transmitting the images through radio waves. The first image appeared in the *Daily Mail* in December 1922.[59] He patented the wireless photography process, which made him a millionaire before the age of thirty.[60] He soon acquired an interest in two radio companies and shortly thereafter bought Sound City Films, which encompassed the largest film and recording studios outside of Hollywood. He quickly extended his portfolio to include holdings in the steel and cement industries. In fact, one of his companies, Pressed Steel, made 90 per cent of the car bodies for the leading British automotive manufacturer and another, Alpha Cement, was one of Britain's largest cement companies.

Not surprisingly, his business empire caused him to travel widely throughout North America and Europe and he quickly built up a vast international network of friends and business contacts, which included bankers, financiers, industrialists and politicians. His business dealings also provided him insight into German steel production, which later proved vitally important in assessing Adolf Hitler's war production capability. This sensitive business knowledge, as well as his extensive travels, brought him in contact with the Industrial Intelligence Centre in London, which was focused on gathering information on strategic commodities. This new contact, supported by his business associations and friendships, became an important access point into the influential British inner circle of security and governmental mandarins.

Nonetheless, it was his ability to open doors in the United States that remained closed to the British that made him an extremely valuable asset to Prime Minister Churchill. At the prompting of the British, Stephenson re-established a high-level liaison with J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the spring 1940. Although Hoover was amenable to working with the SIS, he stated he was under strict orders from the State Department not to collaborate with Great Britain in any way that could be seen as contravening the United States Neutrality Acts.[61] As such, Hoover stipulated that the liaison would be a personal one between him and Stephenson and that no other United States government department would be involved.[62]

Subsequently, as a result of his successful engagement with Hoover, in June 1940, the head of the SIS dispatched Stephenson to the U.S. as the British Passport Control Officer (PCO), which known to virtually all in the intelligence game was the cover appointment for the senior SIS representative in New York. Although Stephenson's original assignment to the "Big Apple" was to act solely as the SIS representative, in December 1940, the Director of the SOE, Sir Frank Nelson, asked Stephenson to also act as the SOE representative in the Western Hemisphere. The SOE task, which was soon to be just one of many, became a major undertaking for the Canadian.

Stephenson's priority assignment was nothing short of daunting. Churchill's direction "to do all that was not being done, and could not be done by overt means, to assure sufficient aid for Britain, and eventually bring America into the war," was far from simple.[63] Stephenson, whose code-name was Intrepid, did not disappoint his superiors. Stephenson quickly built a new secret organization from scratch, which consisted of three main components: the secret intelligence division; the special operations division and the security division. In discussing the issue with Hoover, the Director of the FBI suggested he name his new organization British Security Cooperation (BSC).[64] Although his new organization, still known to the casual interloper as British Passport Control, as it was the actual location to sort out passport and/or visa problems, was actually, behind the curtain, Britain's "intelligence window" into America.

Stephenson and his BSC, however, had to tread carefully and work within the confines of the United States Neutrality Acts, or at least not get caught violating the statutes. Late in 1941, BSC added yet another division to its

organization – Communications. It was created to meet three basic needs. First, to create a means of secure, rapid communication between BSC and its Washington D.C. office. Second, to purchase special wireless equipment that was available only in the US for the British war effort. And finally, to create a secret communication network in Latin America in case underground activities were required should the Axis alliance take power or inspire *coups d'états.* Once established, the BSC Communications Division also fulfilled the function of transmitting the exchange of intercepted enemy messages between American and British intelligence agencies.[65]

Engaging the Americans

Churchill initially gave Stephenson rather broad direction, to get the White House to approve a list of essential supplies Britain needed immediately; investigate enemy activities in the United States; institute adequate security measures against the threat of sabotage to British property and organize American public opinion in favour of aid to Britain.[66] On 15 February 1941, an official directive laid out more specific tasks for the BSC. These were:

1. to establish a SOE network throughout Latin America;
2. recruit likely SOE agents in the United States and other American countries;
3. help influence public opinion in the U.S. in a pro-Allied direction; and
4. to make contact with various European refugee and exile movements in the New World, as well as to help create secret communications channels for SOE networks.[67]

For Stephenson the key element of his appointment in New York was to generate American public support for the British war effort and foster a pro-British American sentiment. Quite simply, he understood Churchill's priority of getting the United States into the war. Although Stephenson had a good working rapport with Hoover, he astutely realized that cultivating his relationship with Colonel William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan, a First World War veteran, winner of the Congressional Medal of Honour, renown lawyer and politician, and importantly, one of the President's trusted advisors, represented his single most important contact in the United States.[68]

Another key association Stephenson nurtured was with Robert Sherwood, one of the President's principle speech writers. Sherwood, a devout Anglophile and anti-Fascist, made a habit, with the President's full knowledge, of allowing Stephenson to read the draft of speeches written for the president and provide comment to capture the British point of view to ensure the speeches supported the British war effort.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, the American President, also assigned his close friend, millionaire businessman Vincent Astor, as his personal liaison to Stephenson so that he could be regularly informed of specific British concerns or requirements that could not be passed through normal diplomatic channels. This conduit also allowed him to get briefed on BSC investigations into enemy activities in the United States.[69]

Undermining the Nazis in the United States

Undeniably, William Stephenson and the BSC fulfilled a vital function for the Allied war effort. First, Britain was in critical need of war supplies and the United States, as well as Latin America, represented an important storehouse. Stephenson and the BSC ensured access to these supplies. Second, the BSC denied the same to the Axis powers. In addition, and most importantly, Stephenson and the BSC were influential in promoting pro-British sentiment that was essential in drawing in American support and, in accordance with Churchill's grand design, American participation in the war.

From its inception, the BSC undertook a number of tasks in the Americas:

1. The collection of intelligence concerning United States and Latin American affairs – both foreign and domestic – affecting British interests;
2. The collection of external intelligence – intelligence that is to say, derived from sources within the Western Hemisphere but relating to areas outside the Western Hemisphere;
3. The penetration of unfriendly, as well as enemy, diplomatic and consular missions;
4. The establishment in Latin America of an SOE organization, with the primary purpose of preparing for underground activities in the various republics against the possibility (which at the time seemed far from remote) of Axis invasion or Axis-inspired revolution;

5. The organization of free movements among foreign exiles and minorities in the Western Hemisphere for the purpose of encouraging and strengthening resistance in the occupied countries;
6. The direction of subversive propaganda from American sources both to Europe and the Far East;
7. The institution of measures to prevent the enemy from smuggling supplies both to and from the Western Hemisphere;
8. The institution of security measures in Latin American ports where British ships called;
9. The recruitment of agents in the Western Hemisphere to undertake either SI or SO work in enemy-occupied countries;
10. The training of agents for the establishment in Canada of a special training camp which was opened coincidentally with Pearl Harbor; and
11. The procurement in the Western Hemisphere of special supplies for the underground in occupied countries.[70]

These tasks were significant, but the BSC went further. In January 1941, the SOE implemented a plan to:

1. Appoint a representative in each Latin American Republic with a view to establishing a Special Operations organization to cover Latin America;
2. Recruit in the Americas citizens of enemy or enemy-occupied countries who would return to their countries of origin to contact already existing subversive elements and to form new subversive cells;
3. Take any warrantable action likely to influence the entry of the United States into the war and to discredit the enemies of the Allies in the USA;
4. Make contact with all the various groups of dissatisfied European refugees and free movements in the USA; and
5. Arrange lines of communications from the Western Hemisphere into enemy and enemy-occupied countries.[71]

Clearly, the United States was a prominent target. Although the Americans were not as sensitive as the British to the threat that existed in the Americas to the Allied war effort, there was reason for concern. The British assessed the threat as a clear and imminent danger. In the United States alone there were 6,000,000 German-speaking Americans and 4,000,000 Italian-speaking

Americans. Many of these American citizens with ties to the Axis powers were employed in factories that produced British war materials. Others worked in the freight yards, railways and on the docks through which Allied war material transited. The risk was substantial. After all, Britain placed orders for $4,000,000,000.00 worth of war materials.[72] As the BSC history noted, "It was a dangerous situation; for a wide-scale sabotage campaign in the private factories producing arms for British account or against the large proportion of Britain's 20,000,000 tons of shipping which used American ports could have proved disastrous."[73]

Although the British Purchasing Commission was technically responsible for prevention of sabotage in the United States, aside from minimizing risk in the factories that produced war materials for Britain, it had scant ability of securing the myriad of ports from which the material was sent. Moreover, the American authorities showed little concern for protecting British property. Not surprisingly, BSC absorbed the British Purchasing Commission and immediately expanded its scope of activities. It posted security officers, designated as Consular Security Officers (CSOs), to all American and South American ports where British ships called to load war supplies. The CSOs' primary task was to protect British ships while in port from possible saboteurs. As an example of the scope of activity, in a single three-month period, CSOs and their staffs in North America carried out over 5,000 inspections on nearly 800 ships, while in South America, they conducted over 2,500 inspections on 859 vessels.[74] In the end, throughout the war not a single British ship was lost or seriously held up from sailing due to accident or sabotage in an American port.

To assist with security and cut down on smuggling, the BSC also instituted the Ships Observers' Scheme. Under this program one or more observers were appointed among the crew of every neutral ship sailing from the U.S. or Latin America. These observers would be met by an agent in all the principal ports at which the respective ship would dock. The observer(s) would then report all suspicious activity (e.g. Nazi or communist talk among the crew, smuggling, suspected Axis agents). The program met with some significant intelligence coups but overall fell short of expectations. As the program entailed agents working in the US, once the Americans passed legislation restricting the activities of foreign agents operating on American soil, the BSC shifted control of the program to the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence.[75]

Security aside, Stephenson focused much attention on the important task of swaying American opinion and trying to move the U.S. from an isolationist stance to one of active participant. As such, Stephenson sought out sympathetic journalists and media moguls. Papers such as the *New York Post, New York Herald Tribune, New York Times* and *Baltimore Sun* became important allies. Conversely, hostile papers that could not be co-opted were targeted for actions to put them out of business.

The same approach extended to radio stations. In fact, a New York-based radio station, WRUL, which possessed a powerful short-wave transmitter, was subsidized by BSC and became an important propaganda tool. Stephenson recruited foreign news editors, translators and announcers, and he went so far as to provide news bulletins and commentaries.[76]

BSC also took aim at the American isolationists and German-American clubs. By the spring of 1941, BSC estimated there were approximately 700 chapters and a million members of American isolationist groups. In fact, Britain's ambassador to the U.S. reported nine out of 10 Americans favoured staying out of the war.[77] As such, the BSC certainly had a hard nut to crack.

Undaunted, the BSC infiltrated members into the isolationist groups in an effort to turn up information that they could use to discredit the organizations and prove they were a front for the Nazis. Indeed, the BSC was eventually able to demonstrate that there was active Nazi activity in New York, Washington, Chicago, San Francisco, Cleveland and Boston. In some cases, they were actually able to trace German money transfers to the America First groups.[78] This information was readily provided to Hoover and Donovan.

BSC agents also attended meetings to keep track of members and worked at creating effective counter-measures. Notably, the BSC agents were not above harassment. For example, when Senator Gerald Nye spoke in Boston in September 1941, agents distributed thousands of handbills labelling him an appeaser and "Nazi lover." In addition, agents tried to disrupt an America First Rally at Madison Square Garden by printing phoney tickets.[79]

Following the apparent philosophy of the SOE that the ends justify the means, the BSC also recruited agents to penetrate enemy or enemy-controlled

businesses, propaganda groups, diplomatic and consular missions. BSC agents and representatives were posted to key points in Washington D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle. One such agent, code named Cynthia, was directed to renew her relationship with Italian naval attaché Alberto Lais, who was posted to the Italian embassy in Washington. Cynthia is credited with warning the Americans of the plans to scuttle ships harboured in the U.S. and for assisting in obtaining Italian codes.[80]

No potential avenue of approach to disrupting enemy activity in the U.S. was overlooked. The BSC also established contact with several minority groups with the aim of creating pro-Allied movements and recruiting agents. For example, Austrian-Americans were approached and an organisation known as "Austria Action" was formed in an attempt to unite all anti-Nazi Austrians. In spite of differences between the various groups this project rendered pioneering service insofar as it was the first minority organization to receive benevolent recognition from the U.S. Department of Justice, which was then keeping a watchful eye upon all foreign minorities in the United States.[81]

In addition, the BSC, working with American Jugoslavs, established the "Slav Bulletin" and created a centre for anti-Nazi activities among the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in the U.S. Lectures were arranged by democratic Slav leaders and groups were established to watch Nazi agents among the Croats and Slovaks. In the same vein, close contact was established with the main Ukrainian democratic group, known as the "Defence of the Ukraine."

The BSC also established contact with members of the Hungarian Communist Party. In addition, BSC special operations ran a Hungarian language newspaper to counteract pro-German feelings. BSC also developed ties with anti-Nazi elements among the Carpatho-Russian clergy and they developed a close co-operation with the Mazzini Society, as well as extending contacts to the various labour organizations with young Italian Socialists in an attempt to persuade them into a more active anti-Nazi policy.[82]

Attention was also focused on winning over Arabs. As the BSC official history captured, "at the time when a British crusade to liberate Syria was considered imminent the principal American Arab newspaper *Al Hoda* was persuaded to become entirely pro-British." In addition, a Near East Information Bureau was

established in New York, and broadcasts over WRUL were subsidized in all the principal Near Eastern languages.[83]

Significantly, subversive propaganda was also directed against enemy agents. For example, Dr. Kent Rieth, a German diplomat arrived in the United States in 1934 with the double mission of buying up American owned oil properties in Eastern Europe, as well as contacting all U.S. political groups favouring isolationism in an attempt to hinder application of the Lend-Lease Bill. In May 1941, SIS handed a document of Rieth's activities to SOE for appropriate action. SOE conducted a press campaign breaking the story as an exclusive to the *New York Herald Tribune* and then by feeding out other angles to other newspapers and agencies. As a result, Rieth was harassed by media for ten days, after which he was arrested by the FBI and subsequently expelled from the country.[84]

The SOE also conducted a pressure campaign against IG Farbenindustrie, which the British perceived as a powerful and dangerous concern doing much harm, especially through its connections with the various companies of Standard Oil. Its vice president was a German named Ernst von Rath, a naturalized American who had also been a German agent during World War I. He was now acting as a commercial counsellor at the German Embassy in Washington D.C.. As an American citizen, a wealthy man, and a member of all the best clubs in New York, the SOE believed he was possibly the guiding brain behind the activities of Farben in the U.S. After two weeks of pressure, in which his name and activities were publicized, he resigned. Additional pressure was kept on the company for several more weeks with similar successful results. The Farbenindustrie interests in the U.S. were eventually taken over by nominees of the United States government.[85]

In short, the BSC/SOE stopped at nothing to achieve their aim. In fact, initially they also conducted break-ins in an attempt to access information, codes and correspondence. However, once the Americans joined the Allied war effort following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the subsequent German declaration of war on the United States on 11 December 1941, Stephenson and the BSC no longer had to focus on swaying American opinion or conducting investigations into enemy activity[86] The Americans now actively took this mission on themselves.

CHAPTER 2

Intrigue in South America

With the U.S. entry into the war, Stephenson and the BSC could now focus on Latin America. But this was not without its own problems. From the perspective of the BSC/SOE, Latin America represented a powder keg. As a source of war supplies, Latin America was important. In addition, there were significant economic and political interests at play, which the Axis powers shared. Moreover, Latin America represented resupply and refit sanctuaries for their naval vessels far from home. However, Latin American countries were sensitive to their sovereignty and resented foreign power interference or intrigues.

Complicating matters even further was Clausewitzian *realpolitik*. Although the allies were dedicated to working together to defeat the Axis powers, both American and British economic concerns fuelled national interests. The U.S. State Department was diligent at blocking British actions in Latin America and the British Foreign Office, perceptive to the Latin American and U.S. political sensitivities, also concentrated their efforts at thwarting SOE activities in the region, while simultaneously working hard to protect British economic and political interests.

Regardless of the economic and political dynamics at play, many British Government officials, especially those in the SOE, were deeply concerned of the latent threat. One Government report explained, "It [South America] is at the same time the source of supply of many commodities essential to the war effort of the United Nations and the area of investment of £1093 million of British capital."[87] The importance was not hard to understand. Oil wells in Venezuela and the Dutch West Indies supplied 80 per cent of the fuel used by the Royal Navy (RN) and a significant portion of aviation fuel for the Royal Air Force (RAF). Furthermore, bauxite mines in the British and Dutch Guianas represented 70 per cent of the Allied aluminum supply.[88]

Economic and political interests aside, there was also the real issue of enemy activity. Lord Louis Mountbatten confided to General George Marshall that "it was clear that the Axis agents were having a free run in these [South American] States and it was most important that the position should be reversed as soon as possible."[89] Sir Charles Hambro, the second Director of the SOE, agreed "that the situation there was serious and required drastic action."[90] In addition, another senior British government official acknowledged,

"... the situation in South America worried us greatly. ...Our problem in South America would be the obverse of our policy in Europe. We had to prevent sabotage, and SOE's contribution to that could be to attack, by underground methods, the people in South America who were about to organise sabotage."[91]

The British Chiefs of Staff agreed. On 9 June 1942, they dispatched a telegram to their Joint Staff Mission in Washington. They relayed:

> We are anxious to see an end of Axis machinations in Latin America which constitute serious potential threat to Allied supplies...Our policy in regard to secret anti-Axis activity has been one of laissez faire to avoid risk of upsetting Latin American states...Although overt security measures to prevent sabotage to ships and cargoes have been organized in all major ports by British Security Coordination... except for this Axis have virtually had a free run...It is therefore highly important that secret work should start quickly...We have recommended to Ministers concerned that resources of both SIS and SOE should be made available...We have also recommended that British Security Coordination should extend their overt security measures.[92]

The concern is not difficult to understand. After all, as a Government report revealed, "South America is one of the few sources of war supplies still available to the United Nations and it is a matter of vital importance to see that the enemy takes no successful action to impede their production and free flow to the USA and to the UK."[93]

The SOE's official assessment of the situation mirrored that of the senior British leadership. Captured German documentation only reinforced the perceptions of the dire situation.[94] A formal SOE threat assessment explained:

> Latin America is now the only considerable neutral area in the world and, since the loss of the East Indies and Malaya, it has become an indispensable source of many products vital to the Allied war effort. It is therefore essential that these supplies should not be sabotaged and that there should be no breach of the peace in South America, which would inevitably cause their interruptions. ... Unfortunately, the Governments in all the South American countries are unstable

> and their armies weak and often divided in loyalty, while physical, political, economical and ethno-graphical conditions are ideal for subversive operations. ...Moreover, the continent is permeated by hostile minorities of which the German and Japanese are highly organised, armed and prepared for subversive action, ranging from the supply of raiders and submarines and sabotage of exports, to military and political action on the largest scale.[95]

Quite simply, unlike the situation in the U.S., the British believed that the Axis agents were running amok in South America. Their case seemed to be strengthened with the revelation in early 1940, that the Argentinian Government uncovered a plot, just five days prior to the intended launch date by the Nazi agent Arnulf Fuhrmann and his accomplices, to overthrow the Uruguay government and subsequently mobilize all German residents to create a German colony.[96]

Even the British Foreign Office, who considered the SOE their arch nemesis and despite all their efforts to restrain SOE activities, conceded that South America was an area of deep concern. A classified report explained:

Nowhere in the world are the physical, political, economic and ethnographic conditions so suitable for subversive operations by either side as in Latin America. In all States there are large colonies of Germans, Italians or Japanese, and these, particularly the Germans and Japanese, have for years past been organised, prepared, and in some cases strategically placed in order to assist the Axis war effort when required. [97]

Suspicions of enemy activity ran rampant in Allied circles. The SOE saw menacing shadows in almost every Latin American country. For example:

Brazil – Although there was no proof that Axis forces were using local bases for supplying submarines, officials suspected that German submarines were using bases in the mouth of the Amazon. Moreover, there was widespread belief that enemy sabotage would be conducted on a large scale.[98] Furthermore, the SOE assessment underscored the Japanese threat, specifically, "Japanese colonisation," which analysists described as following a tactical plan. Significantly, a SOE report declared that the Japanese had a military force of approximately "100,000 men with modern automatic light weapons,

including anti-tank guns, hand grenades, machine guns, a completely organised army-staff and all men properly regimented" and ready to go.[99]

Chile – The SOE perceived the German minorities to be "fully organized." In addition, the SOE reported that the Germans had prepared refuelling bases, as well as frontier defences in the Concepcion-Los Angeles area to prevent interference from the North.[100]

Colombia – SOE rated the country as only "weakly pro-Ally."

Cuba – The SOE suspected the enemy was using Cuba "as a clearing house for Axis agents in South America and as a supply base for Axis vessels in the Caribbean."[101]

Mexico – British diplomats reported sightings of enemy submarines off the coast; landing of refueling parties; approximately 5,000 well-organized German citizens; approximately 4,000 Japanese individuals (with ex-servicemen reportedly organizing in districts).[102]

Paraguay – Rated as a "tinderbox," the danger of revolution always being present.[103]

Peru – The SOE highlighted the threat posed by a strong German colony, as well as a Japanese colony of approximately 80,000 people. SOE assessed it as "a latent menace, and reports have already been received of their having established refuelling bases on the Peruvian coast."[104]

Venezuela – SOE assessed oil supplies vulnerable to submarine attack, as well as the fact that the enemy "are known to have prepared landing grounds."[105]

And so, the BSC/SOE, armed with what they considered a compelling threat picture, set forth to tackle the problem. The SOE lines of operation for South America consisted of:

1. Countering Axis organisations by secretly contacting and supporting the parties and minorities sympathetic to the Allies. This will involve organising them and supplying them with money and arms;
2. Exposing the activities of pro-Axis parties so that the Governments concerned can be pressed to take action against them;

3. Protecting sources of supplies for the Allies from sabotage by Axis agents;
4. Neutralising Axis strongholds and bases already formed; and
5. Causing the confiscation or destruction of supplies and dumps destined for Axis use.[106]

Not surprisingly, based on Stephenson's record to date, the SOE was relatively successful. In Bolivia, the SOE warned the anti-Axis Government of a planned Nazi-inspired revolt, which not only strengthened the British position but led to the adoption of numerous security measures and encouraged a wave of anti-Nazi feeling. In Brazil, the SOE provided evidence of skulduggery to the President that resulted in the revocation of the Italian *LATI* airline concession in Brazil. In addition, the SOE supplied information to the Brazilian police authorities in January 1942, which included detailed files on all Germans in the strategic Natal area. This disclosure led to the arrest and imprisonment of numerous Germans. Furthermore, it led to the break-up of the Stoltz espionage group. The SOE also revealed that the Governor's newspaper was receiving subsidies from the Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels. The Governor was subsequently removed.[107]

The SOE had similar success in Colombia, where their release of information led to the arrest and deportation of many Germans, as well as the destruction of a rising Fascist party. Additionally, German agents Erich Guter and Wilhelm Dittmar were arrested for possessing an illegal wireless transmitter, photostatic equipment and compromising documents. Furthermore, a consignment of 2,000 anti-British books imported from Argentina were destroyed. Significantly, they were also able to convince the government to implement new restrictions on Japanese colonies within the country and the SOE broke up *Accion Nacional*, a totalitarian party, by disclosing the party's activities and ties. Finally, the SOE was able to influence the Government into passing a law to expropriate property of Axis nationals.[108]

Elsewhere, SOE agents used personal influence to persuade certain Chilean Cabinet ministers to push the government into rupturing relations with the Axis powers and implementing a law to liquidate all German businesses. In addition, files on German agents were supplied to the police. In Ecuador, the Government was provided with evidence on individuals involved in

pro-German activity, including the President's own brother-in-law. Individuals were either deported or incarcerated. In Venezuela, the same techniques of disclosing information resulted in the expulsion, or black-listing of several important Germans and German firms. Also, 4,000 anti-British pamphlets were destroyed and the Spanish ciphers were stolen from the Spanish Ambassador. In Uruguay, the "Radio Continental" in Montevideo, a powerful Axis propaganda station, was completely destroyed.[109]

In Central America, SOE agents conducted a partial survey of the region and prepared a long list of targets. They were also able to influence the Costa Rican government to pass a law expropriating all property belonging to individuals from Axis powers and the elimination of all German commerce.[110]

Concurrently, throughout the region, the BSC/SOE agents were also laying the foundation for an underground organization to carry on resistance should the Axis invade Latin America, or in the event that any, or all, of those countries declare themselves allies with the Axis. As such, agents compiled a list of all strategic targets (e.g. strategic communications such as bridges, railway lines, airfields, wireless, telephone and telegraph stations; war industry related – electric plants, waterworks, mines and factories) that would derail the enemy.

Despite the relative success of the BSC/SOE, their days were numbered. The British Foreign Office, trying to balance maintaining British friendly relations with Latin American countries and the United States, as well as protecting British economic and political interests, perceived SOE operations as extremely hazardous to their efforts. The fear of discovery of SOE meddling, much less SOE operations, or, even simply the potential discovery of SOE intent to conduct activities, not to mention subsequent consequences, rattled British diplomats. As such, the British Foreign Office worked hard at discrediting SOE assessments of the threat and the requirement for active operations in the region. One Foreign Office diplomat asserted, "the likelihood of some Axis-inspired coup is generally dismissed, except either (a) with outside assistance, or (b) in the event of the war taking a much more serious turn."[111] Another representative explained:

> The Axis threat to our supplies from South America is not as great as SOE would have us believe. ... If SOE were to be given carte blanche in South America the result would be that we should have endless

> quarrels with the State Department who are very touchy about the Western Hemisphere, Pan-America etc and also with the local governments, as a result of which our supplies might be endangered to a far greater extent than by sabotage on the part of German or Japanese residents.[112]

Quite simply, the Foreign Office wanted a halt to SOE action, arguing that the threat was minimal and the pursuit of operations, which entailed great risk of detection, would only jeopardize relations with the Latin American states, as well as the U.S. The Foreign Office insisted, "possibly our greatest asset in Latin America today, in view of the unfavourable course of the war, is our reputation for respectability. This asset would be lost if we were to be detected in exactly that form of ill-doing of which we have so successfully accused our enemies, and relations between the UK and these countries, including economic relations, might suffer considerably, both during the war and the postwar periods."[113]

Exacerbating the issue, was the U.S. hostility to any British presence in Latin America, which the British perceived was largely based on economic interest. Nonetheless, the enmity was stark and had to be addressed. As one official report warned:

> We know that the State Department are opposed to the undertaking of any subversive activities in Latin America at all. A fortiori, they are opposed to such activities on our part; and it would be extremely dangerous to fly in the face of their express disapproval by indulging in such activities in a region which, whether we like it or not, must be regarded as peculiarly within their sphere of interest.[114]

In the end, despite the British view that the Americans were "a bit too complacent about the situation in Latin America," and they seriously questioned the United States' motives, they acquiesced to the American pressure.[115] After all, no one wanted to antagonize their rich, resource laden, and powerful new ally.

As such, Stephenson's SOE efforts in Latin America came at a price. A British Government representative sent to sort out the rivalry between the Foreign Office and the SOE in Latin America, revealed that Intrepid was "probably irretrievably compromised with the State Department." The British official recommended that Stephenson, especially in light of his other tasks and

responsibilities, "devote his activities to close collaboration with Colonel Donovan in North America and Africa – and possibly the Far East." The recommendation also called for a new appointment to be deployed to Washington D.C. to be responsible for the whole of Latin America. This new appointment would "work closely with the State Department and superintend both SOE and SIS organisations. These two organisations, in so far as the State Department agreed, would work in close cooperation in the various countries concerned, thus putting an end to the existing rivalry between them and the constant troubles which are at present continually cropping up."[116]

The controversy finally came to an end in December 1942, when the Head of the SOE reported that the SOE organization in Latin American would be reduced and their operations suspended. Only a minimum of SOE representatives, enough to enable activities to be resumed in the event of unexpected future developments, would be left behind.[117] Consequently, BSC/SOE closed down its operations in entirety in Latin America on 1 October 1944. Nonetheless, the impact on the war effort of BSC/SOE efforts in this region of the world was considerable. The Head of the SOE wrote, "We have been instrumental, through our local representatives and facilities in Canada, in conceiving and setting up the Security Scheme for the protection of British strategic raw materials, their sources and supply lines.[118]

Conclusion

With regard to strategic sabotage, Stephenson and his BSC performed immaculately. By the end of the war, "not a single British vessel was lost or seriously held up by sabotage in a United States port throughout the war."[119] Moreover, Axis interference with Allied shipping in Latin America amounted to only six vessels damaged. Importantly, none were sunk. Yet, the damage inflicted by Stephenson's organization "to German property and nationals certainly exceeded the total damage caused by the Axis powers on the whole of the American continent."[120] Major-General Colin Gubbins, who became the last Director of the SOE, described Stephenson's exploits as, "a series of brilliant individual coups against Axis powers."[121]

Furthermore, the FBI acknowledged that they received a great deal of information from South America through BSC, material that they could not get

from their own sources. In fact, 90 per cent of British high-grade intelligence emanating from South America came through the BSC/SOE.[122] In the end, Stephenson and the BSC fulfilled a number of key functions:

1. The establishment of a secret organization to investigate enemy activities and to institute adequate security measures in the Western Hemisphere;
2. The procurement of certain essential supplies for Britain;
3. The fostering of American intervention; and
4. The assurance of American participation in secret activities throughout the world in the closest possible collaboration with the British.[123]

Clearly, the BSC/SOE operations in the United States and Latin American furthered the British war effort, particularly during the dark days before American involvement in the war.

Simply put, the impact Stephenson had in the United States was dramatic. SOE historian M.R.D. Foot observed, Stephenson played "a leading part in persuading the owners of the United States news media that it was a more constitutional line to take to be anti-Nazi than to be isolationist." He insists, "This transition, which the bulk of the American newspapers and broadcasting stations made between the summer of 1940 and the summer of 1941, encouraged American opinion to follow suit, with world-shaking results."[124]

Stephenson and the BSC was also instrumental in obtaining American assistance in the form of a hundred Flying Fortress bombers for the RAF Coastal Command, over a million rifles for the newly formed Home Guard, as well as kayaks, landing craft, sub-chasers, wireless equipment, radio valves, parachutes and war materials for the Middle East. Lord Mountbatten, Commander Combined Operations Command confided, "I believe too that he [Stephenson] was the man who persuaded President Roosevelt to declare that the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea were no longer combat areas within the meaning of the American neutrality Act, so that it was possible for the Americans to send war material to the British in the Middle East Theatre, and the ships the whole way escorted by American ships."[125]

The results in Latin America were equally impressive. During the limited duration of BSC/SOE operations, they secured war materials for the Allied cause,

while simultaneously discrediting, disrupting and destroying Axis influence and access to South and Central America. In the final analysis, the detailed and well-executed use of strategic sabotage furthered British and Allied interests and war efforts while simultaneously scuppering Axis intentions and endeavours.

CHAPTER 3

SABOTAGE OR DESTRUCTION WILL FOLLOW: THE BLACKMAIL SCHEME, DECEMBER 1943-AUGUST 1944

Dr. James D. Kiras

The connection between airpower and special operations, including sabotage, seems self-evident to modern analysts. The sudden collapse of the Taliban regime in late 2001 led a number of commentators to make bold claims about war and warfare. Observers and pundits heaped scorn on the Presidential administration of George W. Bush for the minimal commitment of American ground forces to Afghanistan in response to the 11 September 2001 attacks in the four weeks following. Two joint special operations tasks forces (Task Force K-Bar and Task Force Dagger), along with a paramilitary special operations force (Team Jawbreaker), comprised the initial cadre of ground forces. These American ground forces would augment and assist local Afghan forces, including the 15,000-strong Northern Alliance, and provide fire support and surveillance from American airpower. Despite predictions by Central Command planners of a long, drawn out fight for Mazar-e-Sharif lasting six months, Northern Alliance and other militia forces had seized all major cities within Afghanistan in 49 days. For some, the combination of speed, accuracy, and limited American involvement was proof positive of a transformation in war, the realization of much predicted "revolution in military affairs."

But how revolutionary was it? Author and naval analyst Dr. Norman Friedman depicted operations in Afghanistan as comprising a new way of war.[126] Three authors from the U.S. Air Force, Craig Wills, Thomas Griffith, Jr., and Richard Andres, labelled the new way of war "the Afghan model."[127] The Afghan model contains three building blocks: competent local armed groups or militias or proxies to shoulder the burden of effort; contemporary airpower, with its attributes of speed, lethality, precision, and range; and, special operations

forces (SOF) to improve the quality and performance of local proxies and connect them to airpower. At the root of their claim is a synergy of effects based on solving a problem each faces alone: a lack of specific information, trust in the information received based on its source, and a lack of mass both in firepower and supply.

Many of these problems have been faced as long as there have been saboteurs, or special operators, and aircraft. This chapter explores a little-known antecedent to the Afghan model that occurred 75 years ago: the *Blackmail* scheme. The scheme envisioned a unique form of strategic sabotage, one backed by the destructive and coercive power of aerial bombing. The chapter begins by placing the *Blackmail* scheme in its historical context with a short survey of other efforts to link together sabotage with airpower. It continues by summarizing the scope and scale of the scheme over the course of its lifecycle from December 1943 until August 1944. Two main incidents illustrate the potential of the scheme: the effectiveness of sabotage of the Peugeot factory at Sochaux and the effectiveness of bombing of the Michelin factory at Cateroux. An examination for the reasons why the scheme was not successful forms the basis of the next section. The chapter concludes with an assessment of why the *Blackmail* scheme warrants further attention as a different method of strategic sabotage.

Sabotage and Airpower in the First & Second World War

The potential of sabotage to become truly strategic took off with the development of powered flight. Although heavier-than-air powered aircraft had been used for military purposes as early as 1911, their potential began to be realized during the First World War, even in its early stages. As early as December 1914, one contemporary author described the Western Front settling into a period in which "spies and aeroplanes have provided the main incidents."[128] Despite a number of innovative attempts, including the use of specially adapted airships and aircraft, the relationship between aircraft and saboteurs remained tenuous at best, particularly given the novelty, flimsiness, and terror associated with new-fangled flying machines. One pilot, for example, noted that his charge "looked down below him into the darkness and showed a certain reluctance to slide off...and he was holding on to the side of my cockpit and stamping

about on the wing."[129] In another case an agent changed his mind while sitting in a delivery and release system known unfortunately as a "topless coffin," a modification installed inside a B.E. 12.[130] Despite some later abortive attempts, such as the effort to demolish a railway tunnel at Laifour and the damaging instead of a canal lock near the town of Valnacour two weeks before the end of the war in October 1918, neither aircraft nor communications technology were sufficiently mature or capable during the First World War to permit anything more than rudimentary support and cooperation of aircraft with saboteurs and secret agents.[131]

Two decades after the Armistice ending the First World War, the reliability and capability of both aircraft and radios had improved dramatically. These improvements, combined with perceived changes in the contemporary character of war embodied in the concepts of "fifth columnists" and ideas about "political warfare," including sabotage and subversion, drove a variety of individual experiments throughout the Second World War. An initial experiment, the attempt to sabotage the massive Škoda Works factory in Pilsen under cover of aerial bombardment, failed three times between April 1942 and March 1943.[132] The most important rationale behind sabotage supported by diversionary air attack, as opposed to aerial bombing of the factory, was to raise morale among the Czech population and spur them into joining Edvard Beneš' Secret Army. Another experiment, the attempt to raid and carry off a German Hs-293 guided anti-ship missile, had a much more functional rationale: technical intelligence to aid in the development of countermeasures. Efforts to integrate air and special operations on the ground at the Marchal and Chemin torpedo factory in Portes-les-Valences in southern France, were also unsuccessful. During the week of 6-13 May 1944, a number of factors conspired against the plan to steal a missile intact, including Allied planning staff vacillation, freak weather, and bad luck.[133]

The *Blackmail* Scheme

A more successful, but lesser-known set of sabotage operations that occurred during the Second World War was codenamed "*Blackmail*." *Blackmail* operations involved close cooperation between the British Special Operations Executive (SOE), the organization responsible for sabotage and subversion in occupied Europe, and the Royal Air Force's (RAF) Bomber Command.

Although the working relations between the two organizations prior to this was anything but warm, they managed to coordinate and work closely together from December 1943 to July 1944 on linking together sabotage with aerial bombing. The *Blackmail* scheme was conducted against thirty targets, and more specifically, against the manufacturing facilities of French firms. The names of some of whose names are instantly recognizable today: Peugeot, Michelin, and Renault. All of the targets selected and approved for the *Blackmail* scheme were in line with broader guidance governing aerial bombing in the lead-up to the invasion of France: the Pointblank Directive. This Directive, issued on 14 June 1943, prioritized air attacks against fighter aircraft, including production factories and supporting industries, as part of the Allied Combined Bomber Offensive against Germany.[134]

Blackmail had one driving purpose: denying Nazi Germany the industrial output, particularly of aircraft components and parts, of a number of large and small factories in occupied France. RAF or American aerial bombing could destroy French factories but the political costs of doing so were high. Bombing industrial targets in any country in occupied Europe, including France, introduced political considerations into planning. Such considerations, absent during planning for raids on industry in Nazi Germany, included the following political factors: limiting the amount of damage caused to industry in order to assist the occupied country's postwar reconstruction and economic stability; and avoiding needless casualties of civilians the Allies had pledged to liberate, represented by a number of governments in exile in London and who had joined the Allied cause. Although considerations of military necessity eventually overcame some of the ethical considerations over French civilian casualties in the lead up to the invasion of Europe, particularly when the subject of bombing of marshaling yards and railroad stations located in city centers came up, it did not override them until the invasion of Europe was imminent.[135]

The *Blackmail* scheme, labeled after the war as "one of the most interesting innovations of the war" and "a first-rate precedent for future collaboration between airmen and saboteurs," was deviously simple in nature.[136] SOE agents parachuted into France would build networks, or "circuits," of agents and organize, train, and supply them, as well as maintain communications with their regional section headquarters. French factory owners or managers would be approached by SOE agents or their proxy agents with their circuit and

offered a stark choice. The owners could actively promote or turn a blind eye to the sabotage of machinery and equipment within their factories. Should they refuse, the RAF would visit and destroy the plants by bombing them.

Blackmail Sabotage: Sochaux

Official historians credit the creation of the *Blackmail* scheme to SOE agent Harry Rée.[137] Rée, operating under the code-name *César* in the SOE Stockbroker circuit, came up with the inspiration one evening "when I sheltered from a British bombing attack, under a peach tree, in Besançon on 15 July."[138] Rée not only had a front row seat to an RAF night raid but saw the after-effects when it went horribly wrong in the nearby French town of Montbeliard. The large raid missed its intended target, a factory, thanks to a pathfinder target marking error, and the majority of bombs fell instead in the town. At least 385 French civilians were killed or wounded by the bombing. Rée observed "the waste and the rubble" the following day and this sight struck a deep chord within him.[139] Before the war, Rée was a self-described "conchi" – a conscientious objector to the military.

Given contacts he already made, Rée went directly to the management of the factory targeted in the raid, the Peugeot works at Sochaux, a commune east of the town of Montbeliard. The Sochaux works produced a number of crucial parts for the German war economy, thanks to some of their unique machinery including wings for Focke-Wulf (Fw)-190 fighters and tank turret rings. Rée approached the plant manager and broached the subject of sabotaging their own works. Once Rée's credentials were established, the Peugeot brothers, Jean-Pierre and Rodolphe, not only provided funding but also agreed to allow sabotage to take place.[140]

Blackmail sabotage as envisioned by Rée was only possible if three elements coalesced together. First, Rée had direct connection to SOE in London, and through them, a means to contact the RAF. He would do his best to prevent future bombing raids but also obtain the supplies necessary for sabotage, including explosives and detonators. The second element was the consent of the factory owners, which Rée had already obtained. The third, and perhaps most important element, was a technical expert well versed in the machinery on the floor. For sabotage to work, the explosives needed to be placed somewhere where they would do the most harm to the equipment.

For these reasons, Rée contacted the plant foreman during his one and only tour of the factory.[141] The sabotage at the Sochaux works began in earnest on 5 November 1943, an apt date given the British celebration of Guy Fawkes' failed Gunpowder Treason Plot (1605), which involves bonfires and fireworks. Sabotage actions over the next six weeks inflicted damage to compressors, lathes, and steel presses on the factory floor. To ensure the plant was out of commission for the longest possible time, Rée guaranteed the destruction of transformers supplying the factory with power.[142] As a result of the extensive damage, the Peugeot Sochaux plant was offline for six months. Rée later described the clever and successful sabotage method in the following, humble manner: "This seemed to me an obvious way of carrying out our policy."[143]

The success of Rée's Stockbroker circuit, which continued operating after his near-fatal escape from a Gestapo agent during which he was shot, provided initial evidence of the soundness of the concept. The concept was further bolstered by a daring attack on the Schmid Roos Ost (SRO) ball bearing plant at Annecy on the 13 November 1943. Both Sochaux and Annecy provided sufficient evidence to RAF Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Charles Portal, that the *Blackmail* scheme warranted further cooperation between the RAF and the SOE.[144] As a "gatekeeper" for requests of RAF resources, Portal had a reputation for denying any requests that would divert aircraft away from what senior service leaders saw as their primary mission, the strategic bombing of German factories. A specific committee to harmonize RAF and SOE bombing and sabotage actions was approved in December 1943.

Blackmail Expands

Armed with the fresh success of sustained sabotage at the Peugeot factory and SRO plant, the *Blackmail* committee first met in January 1944. Several challenges became immediately apparent to the committee members, not the least of which was split lines of command and responsibility between the different authorities for sabotage and airpower in France. Lines of authority became further entangled as the size of committee grew. What started as a simple committee coordination exercise between Bomber Command, SOE, and the Ministry of Economic Warfare (MEW) rapidly ballooned. Additional members provided representation of the equities of the American 8th Air Force, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), as well as other supporting elements in the Mediterranean theatre whose responsibilities extended into Southern

France. In addition, the role of SOE was changing with the realignment of organizations responsible for special operations from January until June 1944 under a single headquarters, the Special Forces Headquarters (SFHQ), whose staff members focused less on industrial sabotage and subversion and more on the preparations for resistance actions in support of military objectives – what is known in more recent doctrine as "unconventional warfare." Bringing together military and paramilitary special operations, including saboteurs, under one controlling leadership led to growing pains. One of these pains was the worsening of the already tense relationship between SOE's more established British-run France or "F" Section and the Free French "RF" Sections for executive control and authority of agents within France.

Agents operating under the *Blackmail* scheme were unaware of these internal organizational frictions and continued to be dispatched to France or if already there, received new tasking instructions. Such agents conducted a number of noteworthy successful sabotage actions, including the Bronzavia aerial engine carburetor plant near Lyon, the Ratier propeller factory in Figeac, and an explosives powder factory in Toulouse.[145] There were also a number of noteworthy failures, some of which were caused by agents unsuitable for either clandestine sabotage work or lacking the delicate touch required to negotiate with factory owners. In one case, interagency missteps and communication almost had fatal consequences. RF agent "Rouleau" was in the midst of negotiating with the Berliet factory owners in Lyon when RAF bombers arrived overhead and bombed the plant.[146] Rouleau narrowly managed to escape the factory and let his displeasure be known to the staff back to SFHQ.

More problematic for the *Blackmail* scheme generally, and field agents and circuit leaders specifically, related to different organizational images of success. In particular, the major point of contention that threatened to unravel the *Blackmail* scheme relates to what sociologist Edgar Schein has termed "basic assumptions," or "as certain motivational and cognitive processes are repeated and continue to work, they become unconscious."[147] Between organizations, these self-evident assumptions can be the source of major tension.

At issue was what constituted proof of success of sabotage between the RAF and SOE, and in particular, the demonstration of proof or visible artifact. SOE

agents reported back successes in the field most often through short radio messages. The radio messages were kept brief to stymie German radio direction and location efforts and to limit the amount of time it took to encipher and decipher. These measures were designed to preserve the security and mobility of circuit leaders and their radio operators and essential to their continued survival as clandestine operatives.

From SOE's perspective, the word of its agents was as good as truth, leading at times to disastrous outcomes for circuits when operational security procedures were not followed particularly well.[148] For RAF leaders, particularly those from Bomber Command, proof of destruction came in form of bomb damage assessment (BDA) photographs. The photographs provided visual confirmation of the extent of damage to a building, from which intelligence analysts made estimates of the percentage of supply or production affected. The difficulties or accurately assessing damaging were not helped by rubble and debris, clandestine enemy repair, as well as endemic overestimation.[149]

Disagreements in assessments between the RAF and SOE led to incomprehensible requests to agents in the field. The RAF demanded evidence of the success of sabotage in factories, which appeared from aerial photographs to be untouched. In order to assuage their RAF counterparts, SOE requested its agents photograph damaged machinery. The life of a clandestine saboteur depends on secrecy, security, and drawing as little attention to oneself, and therefore minimizing suspicion, as possible. The personal risks and anxieties associated with performing acts of sabotage are many. Returning to a scene of one's crime in order to collect evidence, and in particular visual evidence, greatly increases the risk of discovery. Should the saboteur successfully manage to do so, the evidence in turn must be somehow spirited out of the country and be developed and analyzed. Harry Rée was asked to provide such proof and did so, given his unparalleled relationships with the Sochaux factory owners and staff, setting up undue expectations for other SOE agents. The first photograph he sent back was insufficient as those viewing it could not interpret what they were seeing.[150] His contacts within the Sochaux plant took several photographs of damaged machinery and Rée ensured they reached SOE via a courier service across the border in neighboring Switzerland.[151]

Blackmail Punishment: Cateroux

If what occurred at the Peugeot factory was the epitome of the incentives of *Blackmail* paying off in terms of sabotage, then the destruction of the Michelin Cateroux works near Clermont-Ferrand in March 1944, is the clearest example of the disincentives should factory owners fail to comply with the demands of *Blackmail* sabotage. The example of *Blackmail* activities at the Michelin works highlights a number of the dilemmas that accompanied sabotage and resistance. In particular, disagreements between Air Ministry and SOE officials over what constituted sufficient and effective sabotage resulted in the Michelin factory eventually being bombed from the air. The Michelin brothers agreed to requests by the agents of the Headmaster circuit to let saboteurs destroy stocks of finished tires and other industrial supplies on their factory grounds late in 1943.[152] The subsequent destruction of these stocks was greeted as a great success within SOE.

Destroying finished stocks outside the factory was one thing; sabotaging machinery within it something entirely different. Attitudes of SOE senior leaders, including "F" Section head Maurice Buckmaster, hardened towards the seeming intransigence and unwillingness of the Michelin brothers to go along with the next phase of the *Blackmail* scheme. By March 1944, the brothers denied requests to sabotage the machinery overtly within their plants. In part, the actions of the Michelin brothers were complicated by increased German security measures from late 1943 onwards and the discovery by French police agents, or *milicien*, of explosives on factory machinery.[153] The dilemma confronting the Michelins was apparent and not limited to their factory alone among *Blackmail* targets: let SOE proxies work to sabotage equipment within your factory and risk German takeover and possible deportation, or, resist SOE requests and risk having your factory destroyed by RAF bombing. Pride and other socio-economic standing may have played a role as well in the Michelin brothers' calculations. According to a field agent assigned to another target, he concluded that "he doubted very much whether a French factory owner would agree to sabotage his own factory, as a Frenchman always prizes his material possessions very highly. Source would, however, be quite willing to try to have the place sabotaged by a workman or someone else assigned to the factory."[154]

To validate the *Blackmail* scheme and give its threats some credibility, and desperately in need of an example of punishment to back the threats, the SOE members of the *Blackmail* committee lobbied RAF Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Charles Portal, to press home an aerial attack.[155] Their lobbying was reinforced by field agent requests asking the Michelin factory be bombed. The subsequent attack by RAF 617 Squadron on the factory on 16/17 March 1944 was an impressive feat of precision bombing during the Second World War, using 12,000 pound "Tallboy" bombs and incendiaries. The accuracy and devastation of the bombing at the Cateroux plant, using the heaviest air-delivered ordnance prior to the dropping of the atomic bomb, was sufficiently interesting to compel the leaders of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey to send a special survey team to the plant after the war.[156]

Blackmail Assessment & Conclusion

Blackmail operations remain relatively unknown for a number of reasons, not least of which because they were ultimately an unfinished experiment on a small scale. *Blackmail* activities were conducted by fewer than a dozen SOE agents against a mere 30 targets across France. They were only conducted over the course of nine months, between late December 1943 and August 1944, with the majority attempted during a narrow three-month window between January and March 1944.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is apparent the timeline for the success of *Blackmail* operations was not only hopelessly optimistic but also unreasonably inadequate given the range of tasks that needed to be accomplished. Such tasks included putting in place field agents, developing networks of saboteurs and agents, establishing local contacts with factory owners, and inflicting meaningful damage on key targets. In a few cases, such as *Blackmail* efforts against the Sainte Ugine aluminum works, the assigned RF agent, code-named "Triangle," had less than six weeks to land, establish himself, contact factory management, and begin sabotage, in addition to other assigned resistance missions.[157] In another case, RF agent "Rouleau," who avoided being bombed in Lyons, was assigned a number of sabotage targets on the outskirts of Paris. The factories assigned to Rouleau not only comprised a wide range of industrial products but were distributed around the outskirts of Paris, necessitating considerable travel. The *Blackmail* committee seemingly gave little

consideration to the demands it was asking of its agents when assigning them targets, much less the risks it was asking them to take in the face of effective local German Gestapo and French *miliciens* counterintelligence activities.[158] Indeed what SOE and its section heads asked of its agents and circuit leaders sometimes bordered on the superhuman.

Organizational cultural differences played a significant role in limiting the scope and conduct of the *Blackmail* sabotage scheme. A clear example of how basic assumptions endemic to organizational culture can undercut effective collaboration is evident in the earliest correspondence by RAF Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Norman Bottomley to Vice Chief of SOE, Henry "Harry" Sporberg, agreeing to the establishment of the *Blackmail* committee:

> Hitherto our main difficulties have been (i) lack of concrete evidence that you can destroy important plants as certainly and as permanently as can be done by bombing. (ii) the question of security in discussing our plans with your organisation and particularly the danger of R.A.F. intentions ultimately becoming known to anyone outside this country, to the grave jeopardy to the lives of our crews.[159]

In short, Bottomley entirely misunderstood that sabotage could not accomplish what he expected of it, nor should it. Sabotage can only guarantee temporary disruption at best and not destruction. What constituted "concrete evidence" has already been discussed previously. Last and certainly not least were differing frames of reference about the value placed on the lives of each organization's individuals. Bottomley is suggesting, with some cause, that SOE security procedures were not as tight as they should be. To translate potential security breaches as "grave jeopardy to the lives of our crews" not only suggests a level of xenophobia but also a supreme mistrust of SOE and its activities. In short, at this early stage of the *Blackmail* scheme, Bottomley approved of SOE field agents assuming the risks of capture, interrogation, torture, and execution but was unwilling to accept potential risk for his own personnel based on a rather portentous leap of logic.

Given their small scale in comparison to other sabotage campaigns, uneven record, modest contributions to denying Nazi Germany aircraft parts and resources, and relative proximity to the invasion and liberation of France, it is little wonder that *Blackmail* activities remain relatively obscure. Despite

their obscurity *Blackmail* are worthy of study for the insights they provide to strategic sabotage today for four reasons. First, although *Blackmail* activities were conducted within the broader context of a total war, they nevertheless were an attempt to use limited force to achieve limited objectives in a clandestine manner. Since the Second World War, advances in weapons technology and changes in norms and social mores in Western democracies have elevated civilian casualty and collateral damage concerns from a planning consideration to a political, and therefore military, necessity. Second, as *Blackmail* suggests, eventually translating the destruction of a plant into effective coercive leverage against other French factory owners was exceptionally difficult no matter how appealing the idea might be. Few factory owners had similar sets of incentives or freedom of activity to decide. In addition, the SOE agents in the field, under pressure from SOE Headquarters, had little time to understand and fully appreciate the specific issues and concerns of factory and facilities owners and managers. Third, as SOE and RAF increasingly focused on preparations for the upcoming invasion, the patience necessary to allow more indirect methods of approach and attack gave way to direct assaults on factories whose success was immediately reportable. The synergy between airpower, sabotage, and proxy forces was difficult to sustain for organizational cultural reasons. That such issues are timeless is evident in the need to reorient special operations away from "surgical strikes" to more subtle, indirect forms of "special warfare" or irregular warfare.[160] Fourth, as the *Blackmail* scheme evolved, the organizational cultural differences between the RAF and SOE, particularly regarding evidence of destruction and security, increasingly became a source of friction and tension. While the personalities of individuals cannot entirely be discounted, a more noteworthy source of tension was their particular collective organizational understanding of how their actions effectively influenced French factory owners and denied the Germans supplies, or in other words, how success was being achieved and measured, a problem with which contemporary practitioners are more than familiar. Although the precise circumstances that gave rise to *Blackmail* are unlikely to repeat themselves, several possible applications of the concept are worth considering today. Changes in production chains, due to the growth of multi-national and global corporations and increasing outsourcing, combined with new means of violence, including both kinetic and non-kinetic including cyberweapons, suggest the *Blackmail* scheme may be realizable as a form of strategic sabotage in an era increasingly characterized by great power competition.

CHAPTER 4

THE PERFECT INSTANCE: STRATEGIC SABOTAGE OF GERMAN HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION, OPERATION GUNNERSIDE, FEBRUARY 1943

Dr. James D. Kiras

Few acts of strategic sabotage appear to be as consequential, and none so neat operationally, as the attack on the Vemork Hydro plant in Norway in 1943. The plant was the only source the Nazi German Third Reich had for heavy water production in occupied Europe. Six operators, in combination with a lead team of four others, infiltrated the plant and set demolition charges on the existing stocks of heavy water, as well as equipment used in its manufacture. Heavy water is a necessary component in one design to facilitate a controlled nuclear fission reaction, one that unleashes considerable power – constructively for either harnessed energy or destructively for an atomic weapon. The charges detonated shortly after the saboteurs left the plant. Unlike a number of others special operations and acts of sabotage during the Second World War, there were no casualties among the attackers or the attacked.

Given its connection to Nazi efforts to create a controlled nuclear reaction, and its implications for weaponization, this individual action has been singled out for its conduct, as well as its consequences. The official historian of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE), William Mackenzie, termed the attack phase of the action, Operation Gunnerside, as "the perfect instance of the strategic possibilities of sabotage."[161] Mackenzie arrived at this conclusion after considering the span of SOE's activities throughout the war, in the course of writing the organization's in-house history. Time seemingly has done little

to moderate the assessments of Gunnerside's importance and impact. Writing in 2000, historian David Stafford labelled the operation as "the most important act of sabotage by either side during the Second World War."[162]

Given the subject of this volume, strategic sabotage, and based on these assessments alone, Operation Gunnerside deserves inclusion. Beyond that, however, Gunnerside and its effects merit critical inquiry and scrutiny. The goal here is not to produce a revisionist history of the action. Rather, it seeks to answer several questions, including the following: Do these operations continue to merit these assessments? What insights can we derive from their conduct about strategic sabotage? What implications do these insights have for contemporary and future strategic sabotage? To answer these questions, this chapter seeks to place Gunnerside and its related operations in context, first by identifying the driving impetus behind them. Next, the chapter explores the plans for attack and sabotage and their conduct. It concludes with an assessment of the immediate outcome of the operations, subsequent actions, and an assessment of Gunnerside as strategic sabotage.

Impetus for Sabotage

The period of time between 1918 and 1939 is commonly referred to historically, and with the benefit of hindsight, as "the interwar years." The major powers were confronted with a number of planning and acquisition dilemmas. These dilemmas resulted from an uncertain and shifting threat calculations in neighboring countries as well as overseas in colonial possessions, overwhelming fiscal constraints resulting from a global financial crisis as well as loan or reparation payments from the First World War, and a remarkable pace of technological change militarily. Advances in conventional technologies, thanks to metallurgical discoveries and public and private initiatives, resulted in increasingly powerful combustion engine output, more robust vehicle suspension systems, and new methods of rolling and riveting steel and aluminum. These advances combined to make tanks and aircraft lighter, faster, more durable, and with much longer ranges than during the First World War.

Science fiction writers and military theorists drew inspiration from less tangible scientific discoveries, including electricity, radio waves, as well as radiation before and after the First World War (1914-1918). The implications of such discoveries for the future battlefields were clear when authors could

draw on imagination that is unfettered by practical constraints. For example, writer Herbert George Wells speculated on the devastating effects of strategic bombers in *The War in the Air* (1908) and on atomic grenades and bombs in *The World Set Free* (1914).[163] Military theorists grappled with technological change either through practical experimentation and doctrine development, speculation, or both. Strategist Major-General J.F.C. Fuller is representative of the imaginative military minds of the period. In one of his earliest works, and in a bid to spur British military thinking to avoid a repeat carnage wrought by approaches uninformed by technical change during the First World War, he connected scientific invention to strategy and its conduct. In Fuller's mind, "that side which gains supremacy in invention and design is the side which is going to win the next war" and in true form, he stated emphatically that "in a single test-tube may be discovered the secret of the conquest of the world!"[164]

Scientific discoveries increasingly turned science fiction and theoretical speculation into fact on the eve of the Second World War. Among these discoveries were the discovery of the neutron (1932), nuclear fission (1938), and the means of creating a nuclear chain reaction (1939). The primary chemical element used in the research for initiating and sustaining a chain reaction was uranium (U), and more specifically, a rare isotope: U^{235}. To slow, control, and harness the chain reaction process, a neutron moderating medium was necessary and physicists had discovered three useful ones: beryllium, a rare and expensive metal formed through cosmic interactions; graphite, the most stable form of the most common element on earth, carbon; and, deuterium, or an isotope of another common element, hydrogen, discovered in 1931.[165] Deuterium, or "heavy hydrogen" (^2H), in its most common state (^2H_2O or D_2O) is indistinguishable to the senses from its more common relative, water (H_2O). The combination of the colloquial term for deuterium linked to its relative, in its most common form, is "heavy water."

Compared to graphite, heavy water is expensive to produce and prior to the Second World War a single plant did so: the Norsk Hydro Plant at Ryuken near Tinn in Norway.[166] Generating electric power from a nearby waterfall, Norsk Hydro originally also produced synthetic fertilizer. Decreased post-war demand, combined with a global recession, forced the plant owners to diversify. Thanks to the production of gases and heavy water as "a by-product

of fertilizer" by modifying its process, Norsk Hydro returned to profitability prior to the Second World War.[167] The demand for its products was partially met thanks to partnership for manufacturing and distribution with the giant German chemical and pharmaceutical firm, IG Farben.[168]

The rise of the Nazi government to power in Germany in 1933, followed quickly by that country's rearmament, seizure of territory in surrounding countries, and eventual war over its invasion of Poland in 1939, was alarming to many. Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's rhetoric and actions, combined with the mass flight of intellectual capital from Germany in the form of a number of its world-renowned physicists, led a number of Allied physicists to voice their apprehensions to the highest levels of government, including the American President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, in 1939. The start of war, followed by the German invasion of Norway in 1940 and capture of its production and supply of heavy water, lend reality to the idea that Nazi Germany would be the first nation to build a nuclear reactor capable of realizing the theory of a chain reaction, a point senior scientific advisors raised to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in 1941. Once realized, a working reactor could then lead to the creation of a fission weapon capable of realizing the worst scenarios of fiction writers and theorists a generation before.

Intelligence collected and analyzed by the Allies provided a number of insights into the state of German nuclear research from 1940 up to the conduct of the Operation Gunnerside. Such insights included the focus of German efforts to moderate nuclear fission exclusively through heavy water, thanks to neutron-absorbing boron in the graphite used in their experiments.[169] In addition, the Allies were well aware that German access to sufficient uranium was guaranteed through stockpiles seized in Belgium and ongoing mining in Czechoslovakia.[170] Intelligence reports from occupied Norway identified increased production of heavy water at the Norsk Hydro plant. Despite this knowledge several crucial gaps in Allied assessments remained. These gaps included the specific pathway and intention of German research, whether as a reactor for power or weaponization for destruction. Uncertainty due to these gaps led to worst-case assessments[171] and, in consequence, to two main Allied efforts: competition to develop an Allied reactor and fission weapon first through the unprecedented Manhattan Project; and, destruction of critical resources the Nazi Germans would need for a fission device, including heavy

water. In the words of Winston Churchill, the looming question behind the competition and destruction was "What if the enemy should get an atomic bomb before we did?"[172]

The Plan

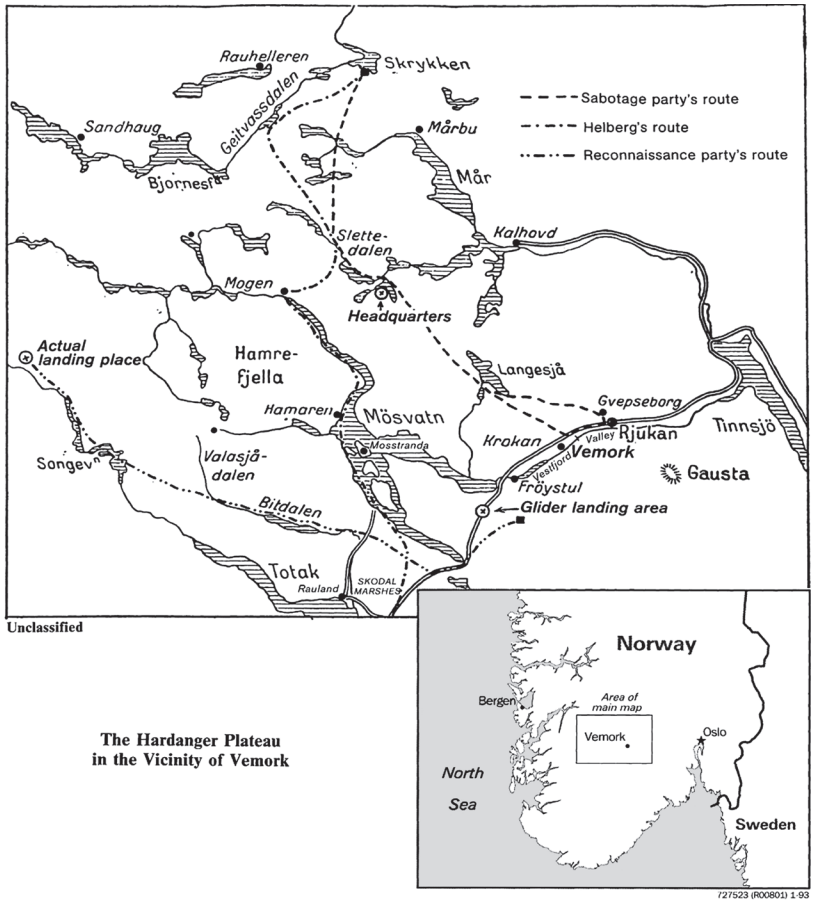
Heavy water production and supply was one element in the Nazi German nuclear physics research and design within Allied reach. The three main options for destroying heavy water stocks and production were aerial bombing, a large-scale commando raid, and sabotage. Rather ironically these three options were identified in June 1942 by scientific advisor Arthur Compton, and not a member of any military planning staff, on how to prevent Germany from developing a fission weapon.[173] Aerial bombing was least palatable option for several reasons. These reasons included not moral reservations associated with causing possible civilian casualties. Too few bomber types available in England had the range or payload to reach the target and with the RAF conducting mostly nighttime area bombing, this left the American daylight sorties as a possibility. The Eighth Air Force was still building up its bases and strength in Europe in late 1942. With insufficient mass, Eighth Air Force B-17s were likely to be intercepted and shot down by increasingly strong German defenses in Norway, including fighter interceptors directed by radar. The results of a previously attempted small-scale raid by RAF B-17s during the daylight on Oslo on 8 September 1941 meant that heavy casualties among aircraft and aircrew could be expected in any future raid.[174]

A large-scale commando raid against Norsk Hydro was much more appealing to Allied leaders and planners than aerial bombing. The British had a well-established and proven capability resident in its Combined Operations Command, a joint interservice command headed by the flamboyant, compelling, and controversial Lord Louis Mountbatten. Commando forces had already proven themselves in a number of raids on Nazi-occupied Europe. Of the four raids attempted against Norway in 1941, one of the largest and most successful was Operation Archery against fish oil stocks and production on the island of Vågsøy. The raid was conducted on 27 December 1941 by elements of four different Commandos, as well as members of the Royal Norwegian Regiment, totaling 570 raiders in all, with considerable air and naval support.[175] Experience and confidence gained in raiding from the sea led to more

ambitious operations in 1942, including one against a Norwegian powerplant in January (Operation Musketoon). The confidence of the Prime Minister and the cabinet in the Combined Operations Forces led to their tasking for Operation Freshman.

The plan for Operation Freshman was audacious and fraught with risk. Two Horsa gliders, towed to the Norwegian coast by tugs, would be released and carry 34 raiders near to their target. The raiders, consisting of Airborne forces and Royal Engineers demolition experts, would be met by a reception team of four Norwegian operators previously landed in the region and trained by SOE, codenamed Operation Grouse.[176] The reception team, parachuted in a month before the raid, would make contact with a local agent, Einnar Skinnerland, and his network of contacts. The team and Skinnerland would identify a suitable landing site for the gliders, and the best approach route to the Norsk Hydro plant (See Figure 4.1 below), while the raiders continued to rehearse their landing and demolitions. Mackenzie wrote of another Norwegian raid that "the element of luck is beyond insurance in operations on so small a scale."[177]

Luck was certainly not with the members of Operation Freshman. A combination of bad weather, navigational problems compounded by technical issues with a beacon homing system, and pilot error led to the crash of one of the tugs and both gliders. Those lucky enough to survive the crash were tortured, executed, or both by the Gestapo. A captured map, along with conflicting information about disclosure of the raid's target by some of the remaining prisoners, confirmed for the Germans that the Allies had the Norsk Hydro plant in their sights, increasing the difficulty of any subsequent Allied attempts.[178]



The Hardanger Plateau
in the Vicinity of Vemork

FIGURE 4.1: Map of the Hardanger Plateau, showing Grouse, Freshman, and Gunnerside landing areas and routes.[179]

With another airborne raid out of the question, based on the heavy costs for no return incurred during Operation Freshman, sabotage looked like the only remaining possibility of the available options. Some sabotage was already occurring with the heavy water supplies inside the Norsk Hydro plant. Dr. Jomar Brun, the production chief within the plant, was doctoring heavy water at the plant using the simplest of means: adding cod liver oil, which led to inexplicable foaming and inevitable production stoppages.[180] As a plant insider, not to mention management, Brun had unquestioned access to all areas, especially as the Germans were relying on him to help increase heavy water production

at the factory. Brun's actions could introduce some delays into the process but Norsk Hydro production of heavy water was nevertheless increasing, with deliveries to Germany of 800 kg.[181] More dramatic action was required.

The nature of the sabotage mission for Norsk Hydro required carefully selected individuals. Several thousand Norwegians had escaped or fled the country during its invasion and occupation by the Germans. While many wanted to fight the Germans, not all possessed the appropriate and mindset and skills for the type of sabotage envisioned by SOE. In the words of Colonel John S. Wilson, head of SOE's Norwegian Section:

> When [the] Section first started...men of the commando type were recruited. But after our sabotage work got underway in Norway, many of them had to be transferred to the regular Norwegian armed forces. However brave and efficient these men were, it began to be realized that other abilities and qualities were required. The tough gangster type of detective fiction was of little use, and, in fact, likely to be a danger. Help and support to Norwegian resistance could only be provided by men of character, who were prepared to adapt themselves and their views-even their orders at times-to other people and other considerations, once they saw that change was necessary. Common sense and adaptability are the two main virtues required in anyone who is to work underground, assuming a deep and broad sense of loyalty, which is the basic essential.[182]

To further ensure "men of character" were recruited specifically for Operation Gunnerside, Wilson gave the prospective team leader for the mission, First Lieutenant Joachim Rönneberg, unprecedented latitude in selecting the five others for the mission: two other junior officers and three senior enlisted: Knut Haukelid, Kaspar Idland, Frederik Kayser, Hans Storhaug, and Birger Strömsheim. All were expert skiers and each was apprised of the importance of the sabotage mission, in general terms, as well as more unusual information: the outcome of Operation Freshman. The team members were motivated to succeed with an additional disclosure: should they be unable to perform or scrub the mission, the Allies would have no choice but to send in bombers and potentially kill thousands of Norwegians.[183]

Following selection, the six team members for Gunnerside travelled to Brickendonbury Manor, the home of SOE's Special Training School (STS) 17 for sabotage.[184] At STS 17 the Gunnerside members honed their skills in several task. These tasks included handling explosives, identifying heavy water high concentration cells from other machinery, and placing explosives. More specifically, STS 17 went to great lengths to construct replicas of heavy water high concentration cells to aid in the training.[185] Doing so allowed the saboteurs not only to learn the point where their explosives would do the most damage, but also practice in a range of conditions, including complete darkness.

STS 17 and the Gunnerside team were aided in their preparations and rehearsals by information of incredible detail and fidelity. The designer of the heavy water plant addition to Norsk Hydro, Professor (Major) Leif Tronstad, had fled Norway after the occupation. As one who designed the plant and supervised its construction, Tronstad had intimate knowledge of the facility and its surroundings. His knowledge, however, was dated by his departure from the country. Since 1940, the Germans had modified the facilities to increase production. More up-to-date information on the plant's facilities was provided to the Gunnerside team by Jomar Brun, working through Tronstrad to preserve operational security. Brun had been contacted by a representative of the Norwegian government-in-exile and ordered to report to London in October 1942. After considerable preparation and a series of episodes, including cover stories, crossing the Swedish border, internment in a refugee camp, and being spirited out of Sweden by a Special Duties aircraft, Brun and his wife arrived in England.[186] While the updated information was important to the Gunnerside team members to prepare for the demolition and avoid the German barracks installed within the plant, one specific piece of information proved invaluable: an unguarded and unreinforced cable duct that allowed the saboteurs to enter surreptitiously and avoid having to blow the locked steel doors at the entrances to the plant.[187]

The Operation

Delays prevented the Gunnerside team from being dispatched to Norway for several weeks. The delays were caused by a number of factors. To ensure the operators landed as near as possible to their selected drop site, Special Duties aircraft would follow standard operating procedures and infiltrate at night

during the moon period. Night infiltration lowered the chances of successful interception by German fighter aircraft. Flying during the moon period, when the moon was full, allowed Special Duties crews to supplement dead reckoning and inertial navigation with better conditions for the visual identification of landmarks. The more significant delay to the mission was caused by weather conditions, particularly during North Atlantic and Norwegian winter. As a result of these factors and others, the Gunnerside team finally dropped on the Hardanger Plateau (see Figure 4.1) on 17 February 1943.[188]

While subsequent events about the Gunnerside team's landing and survival make for inspiring reading, they are not germane to the sabotage that took place at Norsk Hydro. The events are chronicled in English in a number of books, including Thomas Gallagher's *Assault in Norway* (1977), Dan Kurzman's *Blood and Water* (1997), and most recently in Neil Bascomb's *The Winter Fortress* (2016). The Gunnerside team eventually linked up with the Grouse advance party and planned their sabotage mission. Even though the Germans did not glean useful information from the survivors of Operation Freshman, its target and approach march, as well as the size of the party involved, suggested the most likely approach route by which another attempt would be made. As a result, the Germans increased the size of the security detail at the Norsk Hydro complex, hardened the facilities doors and locks, and installed machine gun positions and laid mines to improve the defenses. The Grouse team members had noted these defenses while waiting for the arrival of the Gunnerside team. Using the information provided by Dr. Brun, and local knowledge of the geography resident in the Gunnerside and Grouse team members, supplemented by additional special reconnaissance of the plant and other insider information, the saboteurs collectively agreed upon an audacious plan. The plan involved descending and ascending the sides of a nearly 700-foot ravine, and crossing the river Måna between, in order to reach a set of railway tracks leading to the plant that were unguarded.[189] The team members considered other approach routes, including across a suspension bridge now heavily guarded by the Germans.

After a harrowing descent, crossing, climb, and walk to the Norsk Hydro complex in the evening of 27 February, the Gunnerside team members considered how best to enter the heavy water annex. The Gunnerside team split up in pairs while the Grouse team guarded the skis and other escape equipment.

One pair, Haukelid and Storhaug, would provide security and cover fire of the German barracks yard for the remaining saboteurs. The other two pairs would seek the most silent entry into the annex to avoid raising the alarm of the patrolling guards. Rönneberg and Kayser worked their way through the cable tunnel identified by Dr. Brun while Idland and Strömsheim searched for another entry point.[190] Redundant explosives between the teams meant that any one pair had sufficient material to affect the demolition. A few nerve-wracking incidents occurred that had the potential to compromise the mission: Kaysar's Colt pistol slipped from his grip and clattered loudly among some pipes; Idland and Strömsheim broke a window near to the heavy water cells, where Rönneberg was setting his charges. Kaysar's reaction to the shattering pane behind him almost led him to shoot his fellow saboteurs. Luck was certainly with the Gunnerside saboteurs, as was the benefit of considerable pre-mission training. The crux of the sabotage job, setting the charges around the heavy water cells, went smoothly thanks to numerous rehearsals and the explosive already shaped to wrap around the cells. The latter "fit around the apparatus like a glove" as Rönneberg later reminisced.[191] While in the process of setting and fusing the charges, the four saboteurs inside the plant captured and detained two Norwegian workers inside the plant, a night watchman and night foreman. After setting the short fuses on the explosives, Rönneberg, Kaysar, Idland, and Strömsheim released their two Norwegian prisoners, but not before leaving equipment to convince the Germans the British airborne commandos had conducted the sabotage. After a short delay, the explosives went off in the early morning hours of 28 February, throwing the Germans into confusion as to its source: a commando raid or an air attack.

In the ensuing confusion, the Gunnerside and Grouse team members made good their escape. Behind them lay eighteen destroyed heavy water cells and with them, almost 1,000 pounds of heavy water.[192] Subsequent recovery of a Thompson submachine gun and parachute wings from the plant, along with the eyewitness statements of the night watchman and foreman, convinced the overall commander of German forces in Norway, Generaloberst Nickolaus von Falkenhorst, that highly skilled British saboteurs, and not the local Norwegian resistance forces, were responsible for the attack. As a result, no reprisal jailing or executions followed against the local Norwegian population. Luck continued to favour those conducting the mission. Five of the six Gunnerside saboteurs escaped to Sweden, after a two-week skiing trek through treacherous winter

conditions that also stymied German search efforts, and eventually returned to Britain. Haukelid, along with the Grouse team members, was ordered to remain in Norway and assist the resistance organization within the country, Milorg, at the behest of the Royal Norwegian government-in-exile in London.[193]

The Outcome

Operation Gunnerside had two immediate effects. First, the sabotage destroyed existing stocks of available heavy water, the equivalent of two months production at the plant, ready to ship to Germany. Second, sabotage damaged electrolysis cells and other equipment necessary to manufacture more heavy water in the future. Initial Allied intelligence estimates suggested damage severe enough to plant equipment to delay future production for as much as 24 months.[194] These estimates were wildly optimistic and, in keeping with ones conducted for other sectors of the German war economy, greatly underestimated German capability, drive, and determination to restart damaged means of production. After spending six weeks repairing and sending heavy water from Germany back to Rjukan as a catalyst to restart the process, the Germans were able to resume production in sufficient quantities to alarm Allied scientists once again.[195]

The Allied response to the speed of the recovery of German heavy water production at Norsk Hydro considered a range of options, including additional sabotage as well as aerial bombing. Sabotage was only possible thanks to Norwegian workers inside the plant supportive of Allied efforts, as well as the remarkable intelligence collection and reporting efforts of Einnar Skinnerland's impressive network. Skinnerland not only reported on production rates of heavy water within the plant but coordinated efforts to resume Dr. Brun's method of sabotage before Gunnerside: introducing vegetable oil into the heavy water while it was being distilled, causing it to foam and leading the Germans to suspend production to try and figure out why this was occurring. While the results continued to be encouraging, and German production of heavy water cut by two-thirds, such actions put valuable agents and information sources inside the plant at risk.[196] Increasing German security measures, both in production and transport, meant that future sabotage or raids would be even costlier enterprises than Operation Freshman.

With two of three options outlined in the Compton memo of June 1942 unpalatable for reasons of risk versus return, the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff agreed that aerial bombing was the best one to halt production by late 1943. American precision daylight bombing, in contrast to British nighttime area bombing, had achieved some impressive, if expensive results. More importantly, B-17 and B-24 bombers had proven themselves capable of extremely long-range, precision strikes against critical German production capabilities. One of the most dramatic examples of such a precision strike was Operation Tidal Wave, the low-level raid of the various oil production and refining facilities around the town of Ploesti, Romania, launched from Libya in August 1943.[197] For these reasons and others, including the recommendation of General Leslie Groves, the head of the Allied program to build an atomic weapon (the Manhatten Project), the Combined Chiefs of Staff approved an airstrike against the Norsk Hydro plant, to the horror and dismay of others, including Tronstad and Wilson.[198] On 16 November 1943, almost 200 Eighth Air Force bombers struck various industrial buildings around Rjukan, including the Norsk Hydro plant, over the course of a half-hour.[199] Sources disagree in their evaluation of the effectiveness of the raid, with some focusing on Norwegian civilian casualties (22) and the mistaken targeting of the fertilizer plant for the Norsk Hydro plant by some of the lead aircraft.[200] Sources reporting from within Norway, however, assessed that the raid "had virtually put an end to the production of heavy water at Vermork," a sentiment shared by German physicist Friedrich Berkei after visiting the bombed plant.[201]

The decision by the Germans to cease production by the end of November 1943 seemingly closes the chapter on heavy water sabotage in Norway. Yet, there was one final act of sabotage, conducted by Norwegian operatives, that definitively ended German atomic research using heavy water. Einnar Skinnerland's network reported German plans to dismantle heavy water production equipment and transfer it and existing supplies to facilities in the Third Reich, likely the "small experimental installation at Leuna," south of Halle in southeastern Germany.[202] One of the leaders of the subsequent sabotage effort against the remaining supply of heavy water was Knut Haukelid. The transport engineer in Norsk Hydro, Kjell Nielsen, reported to him the method of transport as well as misleading external markings on the drums. Haukelid and his team considered various methods of sabotage, ranging from a raid

along the lines of Gunnerside to interdicting the drums of heavy water while they were being transported by train. The "safest option," from the standpoint of risk to the mission and the three operatives conducting it, would be sink a rail ferry transporting the drums containing heavy water across Tinnsjå (Lake Tinn), some six miles east of Rjukan. Nielsen provided specific information on the shipping schedule; through personal reconnaissance Haukelid confirmed which ferry would provide transport. Improvising a timing device much longer than standard fuses, and using available plastic explosive, the team of operatives led by Haukelid, dressed in civilian clothes, took passage aboard the ferry. After a brief scare when one of the team was recognized by a member of the crew, the saboteurs placed the explosive against the hull and as near the bow and far below the waterline of the ferry *Hydro* as they could manage.[203] Having set the timer to go off when in deep water, the saboteurs left the *Hydro* before she sailed. At approximately 10:30 on the morning of 20 February 1944, the charges detonated and the *Hydro* went down by the bow, taking with her 39 drums containing 614 kilograms of heavy water.[204]

Assessment as Strategic Sabotage

As a special operation, Operation Gunnerside has much to commend it, particularly in the qualities embodied by its operators, the conduct of the mission, and the fact that it was successful without incurring any casualties, save a cut suffered by Rönneberg on a broken window in the annex. The story of Gunnerside, and the level-headed pragmatism, dogged determination, and heroics of its operators, continues to inspire. New books continue to be written about the operation and Norwegian broadcaster NRK released a dramatic six-part mini-series on the raid from different perspectives entitled "Kampen om tungtvannet," translated in English as "The Saboteurs" or "The Heavy Water War."[205] In addition, all of its members survived the mission and the war, with Operation Gunnerside leader Joachim Rönneberg only passing away in late October 2018. The mission has been hailed by several authors as a peerless special operation to be studied.[206] Others suggest it exemplifies the essence of special operations, through Gunnerside's ability to "resolve strategic threats beyond the capabilities of conventional forces during the Second World War...by performing covert and clandestine operations outside of the conventional force organizational structure."[207]

Some authors are more guarded in their assessment. On one hand, military historian Andrew Hargreaves credits Gunnerside as "the most directly strategic 'independent' special operation carried out in the war." On the other hand, he adds the mission must be viewed as a link in a much broader "complex chain of causation," a view shared by other scholars.[208] Rather than assigning specific "credit" to any one attack, it is important to view Gunnerside as one action among many seeking to disrupt a complex production chain resulting, at its terminus, in a working German nuclear reactor. The more subtle contaminating of heavy water was just as much a form of sabotage in this production chain as was the destruction of the electrolyte cells during Gunnerside.

Assessing Gunnerside as an act of strategic sabotage requires carefully balancing a range of factors. The primary factor is how one determines what constitutes an act of sabotage, much less a strategic one. Pedants will argue Gunnerside cannot be considered sabotage based on the use of uniformed forces – in short, based on contemporary authorities and mission divisions, such forces do not perform sabotage. Others will eliminate the "complex chain of causation" and connect Gunnerside with the subsequent power of the atomic bomb, the success of the Allies in producing (and using) one, and the equal failure of Nazi Germany to do so.

Setting aside biases brought on by hindsight for a minute and looking a little more broadly from a strategic perspective, Gunnerside merits the label of strategic sabotage for several reasons. First, the conduct of the mission itself had the characteristics of both the noun and the adjective. The use of highly specific and technical information used during targeting, as well as specially developed equipment, are the first pair of qualifiers. To count as sabotage, however, such information, targeting, and equipment must be used to disrupt production sources in a complex supply chain. Gunnerside certainly meets the qualifications on this level.

Regardless of explanations that centre the focus of research, weaponization or power production, not to mention the infighting characteristic of almost all major production programs within the Third Reich,[209] scholars cannot deny that heavy water was critical to German nuclear research efforts and Norsk Hydro, and its linkages with IG Farben, provided its only supply. In addition, drawing upon the information available to the Americans and British at the

time, and given the importance accorded to nuclear weapons research and the prioritization it received from the most senior Allied leaders, and taking into consideration other "unknown unknowns," it is difficult to view disrupting or destroying supplies of heavy water as anything but strategically important.[210] Gunnerside, therefore, was the first successful step in a causal chain disrupting the German supply of heavy water. Through its conduct, which frustrated and baffled von Falkenhorst, especially when the perpetrators evaded capture and seemingly vanished into thin air, Gunnerside convinced the Germans the Allies only would only send its best and most skilled commandos on the most important of tasks.[211] German security measures to protect "the crown jewels," as they labelled heavy water, were increased exponentially in the wake of Gunnerside. There is no better qualification of strategic sabotage than increasing your enemy's anxiety about critical supplies, and imagining plots around every corner, than adversely influencing their decision calculus and diversion of resources as Gunnerside so aptly did.

CHAPTER 5

DOUBLE-CROSS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: THE SECRET ITALIAN ARMISTICE GAMBIT

Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn

"There is only one thing worse than fighting with allies, and that is fighting without them."
Winston Churchill[212]

Churchill's musing is apropos. Alliances are designed to strengthen countries and allow them greater advantage in the game of nations. They provide greater resources, access and influence. Undeniably, collective effort is normally more effective than individual endeavour.

However, alliances do have their disadvantages. Every partner has its own national interest; its own objectives; and self-interest. As such, alliance and coalition relations are seldom wholly congruent. There is always bickering, negotiating and compromise to reach collective agreement and action. And, in some instances there is actually subterfuge to achieve an outcome that is completely contrary to the best interests of the alliance.

A stark example of this form of strategic sabotage was the secret Italian efforts to arrange an armistice with the Allies in 1943 as the war visibly began to change momentum and the Third Reich and its allies began to feel the pressure of the Allied juggernaut closing in on their national borders. Realizing their pact with Germany no longer served their national interests, Italian political and military decision-makers arrested Benito Mussolini, their Fascist dictator, and secretly began entreaties to the Allies for terms of surrender.

All of these actions and efforts were done furtively, while attempting to lull the Germans into a sense of normalcy, so that they could scuttle the alliance, as well as Germany's ability to interfere before the Allies had taken a grip of the Italian peninsula.

A Resurgent Germany

The Treaty of Versailles at the end of the First World War was a humiliation for Germany. It also stripped it of its military capability. However, Adolf Hitler's rise to power soon rectified the imbalance in military power. In 1933, he began to rearm the nation in secret. By 1935, he gambled the Allied nations would be reluctant to confront his ambitious program and he openly announced the return of general military conscription to raise personnel to man 36 divisions within his resurgent *Wehrmacht*. In addition, he also directed the creation of an air force. Furthermore, in June of that same year he signed an agreement with the British that allowed a German naval buildup of up to 35 percent of Britain's surface naval strength and up to 45 percent of its tonnage in submarines. On 7 March 1936, Hitler marched German troops into the demilitarized Rhineland. Clearly, he had tossed the Treaty of Versailles out the window. Neither the British, nor the French, had resisted his provocations. By 1936, Hitler was spending 10.2 billion marks on rearmament. Moreover, he entrusted his close crony, Hermann Göring, to supervise his "Four-Year Plan" designed to gear up German economic self-sufficiency.

Hitler's anti-Bolshevik rhetoric, as well as his nationalistic theme of simply trying to rebuild a stable and vibrant German nation seemed to disarm British, French and American critics. The rampant desire not to provoke yet another world war was also a reason for the lack of Allied action.

The apparent Allied lassitude fueled continued German incitement. On 26 July 1936, Hitler assured General Francisco Franco that he would support his cause in the Spanish Civil War. The following day, Hitler dispatched 26 fighter aircraft and 30 Junker JU 52 transport planes. Once again, Hitler seemingly comforted the Western nations by explaining his military support of Franco was to prevent the scourge of communism in Europe. However, there were other motives at play, which included access to important metals for his rearmament program; the cultivation of an ally against Britain and France; an ability to test

his military commanders, weapons and tactics; as well as closer cooperation with the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini and Italy.

In September 1936, Hitler signed a Non-Intervention Agreement that was endorsed by 27 countries including Britain, France, the Soviet Union and Italy. Nonetheless, in November, as the Spanish Civil War turned for the worst for Franco as international brigades, as well as Soviet tanks and aircraft flooded into Madrid, Hitler authorized the deployment of the Condor Legion that consisted, during its time in Spain, of a bomber group, a fighter group and a reconnaissance group, as well as four tank companies. During the course of the war approximately 19,000 Germans served Franco's cause.[213]

Hitler's march to war seemed irrepressible. In March 1938, he annexed Austria. Hitler justified the *Anschluss* by explaining it was simply a matter of German national self-determination. Once again, Britain and France did nothing. Subsequently, Hitler concocted a diplomatic crisis that was settled through the intervention of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who persuaded the Czechs to yield the Sudetenland to Germany through the Munich Agreement in September 1938.

To many observers, particularly Benito Mussolini, it seemed Germany was unstoppable. Although at first he was dismissive, if not contemptuous, of his upstart fellow Fascist strongman, by the start of 1939, Mussolini began to believe there was some benefit in aligning himself with Hitler and his Nazi regime.

Reluctant Allies: A Case of Opportunism

The eventual "partnership" between Germany and Italy was somewhat surprising. According to Count Galeazzo Ciano, who was Mussolini's Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as his son-in-law, neither Mussolini, nor the Italian people held favourable opinions of Hitler or Germans in general. After all, they had been on opposing sides during the First World War.

Moreover, Mussolini saw himself as the preeminent Fascist dictator in Europe. He worked originally as a teacher and journalist prior to fighting in the First World War. In 1919, he formed the *Fasci di Combattimento* (Fascist Party). Mussolini was able to attract an army of followers that included the entire

gamut from gangsters to true patriots. He had organized many of his adherents into an armed and uniformed "Blackshirt Militia." He derived financial support for his cause from industrialists and wealthy benefactors who believed Mussolini would suppress the radical revolution he himself had continually warned Italians was threatening to disrupt their country.

Mussolini's Fascist party ran candidates in the parliamentary elections of 1921. They received a mere five percent of the total popular vote. However, they were successful in duping the nation into believing that they were able to correct Italy's postwar malaise. They succeeded in creating an impression that unlike the indolent elected government that was currently ruling, the Fascists had the solution to all of Italy's postwar ills. In October 1922, Mussolini organized a mass demonstration and march on Rome. His gamble paid off. King Victor Emmanuel III, dismissed the existing democratically elected regime and called on Mussolini to form a new government.

Fortuitously for Mussolini, he was immediately supported by a parliamentary majority. Like most Italians, they believed Fascism was a temporary fix to get the country through the postwar crisis. Once in power, Mussolini, as Prime Minister of Italy, immediately won popular support through massive public works programs that created employment and transformed Italy's infrastructure. On the military side, Mussolini launched a powerful navy, larger than the combined strength of the British and French Mediterranean fleets.[214]

In short, Mussolini had risen to power on a wave of populism, and to a certain degree timely propaganda. By 1925, he had virtually dismantled the democratic constitution. Moreover, he named himself "*Il Duce*" (The Leader) [215] and established a Fascist dictatorship, which would last for the next 20 years. *Il Duce* utilized his newly gained absolute power, reinforced through his political authority, media savvy, and his loyal, violent Blackshirt followers to silence any opposition.[216] His intent was to restore Italy to the glory of the Roman Empire. He hoped to achieve this through territorial gain in Europe, the Dalmatians and North Africa. By 1939, he transitioned from viewing Hitler with derision, to seeing an opportunity to realize his goals.

Feelers had been extended by both sides with regard to formalizing an alliance. As such, on 6 May 1939, once Mussolini learned from his Foreign

Minister, Galeazzo Ciano, who had met German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop earlier on that day, that Hitler had no intention to trigger a war in the foreseeable future, he fervently directed Ciano to push discussions to sanctify a military alliance between the two countries.[217] As a result, on 22 May 1939, Germany and Italy entered into the Pact of Steel. Signed by Hitler and Mussolini, it formalized the 1936 Rome-Berlin Axis agreement, linking the two countries politically and militarily.[218]

The Pact of Steel (German: *Stahlpakt*, Italian: *Patto d'Acciaio*), known formally as the Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy, was a military and political alliance between the two countries.[219] The pact comprised two sections. The first part was a simple declaration of continuing trust and co-operation between the two states. The second component was a "Secret Supplementary Protocol" that encouraged further cooperation and an amalgamation of military and economic policies.

From *Il Duce's* perspective, he viewed this partnership as not only a defensive alliance, namely, a protection from the Western democracies, with whom he eventually anticipated war, but also a source of backing for his Balkan ambitions. Ironically, both sides were fearful and mistrustful of each other. Therefore, they were both hesitant to share their future plans or ambitions. This caginess, detracted from unified action and led to lost opportunities as each side had to "react" to the actions of the other, which seldom led to tactically, operationally or strategically coherent and effective military action.

In summary, officially, the Pact of Steel obliged Germany and Italy to aid the other country militarily, economically or otherwise in the event of war, and to collaborate in wartime production. Importantly, this stipulation was based on an Italian understanding that a war would not occur within three years, or not before 1942/43.[220] Significantly, the Pact, under Article V, stipulated that neither country was able to make peace without the agreement of the other. The specific articles of agreement were:

Article I

> *The Contracting Parties will remain in permanent contact with each other in order to come to an understanding of all common interests or the European situation as a whole.*

Article II

In the event that the common interests of the Contracting Parties be jeopardized through international happenings of any kind, they will immediately enter into consultation regarding the necessary measures to preserve these interests. Should the security or other vital interests of one of the Contracting Parties be threatened from outside, the other Contracting Party will afford the threatened Party its full political and diplomatic support in order to remove this threat.

Article III

If it should happen, against the wishes and hopes of the Contracting Parties, that one of them becomes involved in military complications with another power or other Powers, the other Contracting Party will immediately step to its side as an ally and will support it with all its military might on land, at sea and in the air.

Article IV

In order to ensure, in any given case, the rapid implementation of the alliance obligations of Article III, the Governments of the two Contracting Parties will further intensify their cooperation in the military sphere and the sphere of war economy. Similarly, the two Governments will keep each other regularly informed of other measures necessary for the practical implementation of this Pact. The two Governments will create standing commissions, under the direction of the Foreign Ministers, for the purposes indicated in Article I and II.

Article V

The Contracting Parties already at this point bind themselves, in the event of a jointly waged war, to conclude any armistice or peace only in full agreement with each other. [Emphasis added by author]

Article VI

The two Contracting Parties are aware of the importance of their joint relations to the Powers which are friendly to them. They are determined to maintain these relations in future and to promote the adequate development of the common interests which bind them to these Powers.

Article VII

> *This Pact comes into force immediately upon its signing. The two Contracting Parties are agreed upon fixing the first period of its validity at 10 years. In good time before the elapse of this period they will come to an agreement regarding the extension of the validity of the Pact.*[221]

Despite the agreement, Mussolini continually vacillated on his relationship with Hitler and Germany. He would often rant about his dislike, if not loathing, of his counterpart. He accused the Germans of being untrustworthy, lying and failing to inform him of their intended actions.[222]

Mussolini was not alone in his annoyance. "The pact is better liked in Germany than in Italy," Ciano revealed, "Here we are convinced of its usefulness and hence accept it as a matter of course."[223] He further divulged, "The King is more than ever anti-German. He alluded to Germanic insolence and duplicity and at the same time praised the straight-forwardness of the English, but in speaking with the *Duce* he went so far as to call the Germans rascals and beggars."[224]

While hiding his recurring rancour towards Hitler, Mussolini professed support for the alliance and his antipathy towards the Western democracies. However, he and Ciano were consistently cautioning their counterparts that Italy was not prepared for war, but it would support the Germans economically and morally. This position was less than forthright. While professing cooperation and collaboration, they were simultaneously assuring the Allies they would not be part of any German designed aggression.

Not surprisingly, the Germans became upset when they discovered Mussolini was selling aircraft engines to Britain. Their protests were ignored as Italy wanted to maintain trade with the Allies to continue access to hard currency. In addition, the Italians persisted to counsel other countries, such as Hungary, to take action that was not in Germany's best interests.[225]

As the German march to war seemed ever more likely, on 15 August 1939, Ciano convinced Mussolini "that we must not march blindly with Germany." Subsequently, *Il Duce* decided that he would break with Germany but would do it in a manner that would not be sudden or destroy relations. He sought a solution that would "(1) if the democracies attack, we should be able to free

ourselves 'honorably' from the Germans, (2) if the democracies simply swallow it, without fighting back, we should take advantage of it to settle accounts once and for all with Belgrade."[226]

Although repeatedly trashing the Germans as devious, Mussolini and his entourage conducted a very duplicitous and opportunistic agenda. On 23 August 1939, the Italian foreign minister reminded his counter-part that if Germany invaded Poland before 1942, they would not be ready for war. Three days later Mussolini sent a personal message to Hitler noting that Italy could only offer political and economic aid if Germany chose to go to war with Poland, but it was in no position to offer military assistance.

Although Italy's position should not have been a surprise to the Fuhrer, it was. Hitler had intended to attack Poland on 26 August, a mere three days after the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was signed; however, on receiving Mussolini's pronouncement that he was unwilling to fight with his ally, Hitler postponed the invasion of Poland.[227] In the end, Hitler accepted Italy's inability to participate in direct fighting, but, he requested political support (by means of threatening to enter the war, thus tying down French troops on the French-Italian border) and economic support (by offering Italian workers for German industry and agriculture).

Once again, the Italians proved deceitful. On 31 August 1939, on the eve of the German invasion of Poland, Ciano sent a secret message to both Britain and France that Italy would not fight should Germany start a war over Poland. Consequently, when Germany invaded Poland the following day and war was formerly declared on 3 September 1939, Italy ignored Article III and conveniently stayed out of the fray. However, this decision did not stop *Il Duce* from reassuring the Germans that "Italy represents for Germany an economic and moral reserve, but that later on it may also play a military role."[228]

And so, despite a degree of distrust and dislike, Mussolini decided to hitch his wagon to the resurgent Germany and its strongman as it seemed like an opportunity not to be missed. However, to avoid being dragged into a possible quagmire of conflict, he hedged his bets and played both sides waiting for an indication of which approach, belligerency against the Western powers with Germany, or neutrality, would pay the greatest dividend.

CHAPTER 5

When the Going is Good

As the German war machine shocked its opponents and the Allies appeared languid and unable to mount a credible resistance, Mussolini began to vacillate even more on his attitude towards confrontation. On 28 February 1940, he railed, "There are still some criminals and imbeciles in Italy who believe that Germany will be beaten."[229] Less than two weeks later on 10 March, Ciano revealed, "Mussolini says that he does not believe in the German offensive nor in a complete German success." Four days later he noted, "[Mussolini] would like to get from Hitler a signed document in the shape of a communique which would give him a certain latitude of freedom of action to stay out, even if hostilities should begin on the western front." On 16 March, Ciano reported that *Il Duce* declared, "I shall agree to enter the war, but reserve for myself the choice of the moment. I alone intend to be the judge and a great deal will depend upon how the war goes."[230]

And, as the German fortunes advanced, Mussolini became more intent on belligerency. He began to fear that his window of opportunity was slipping away. On 13 April 1940, after the successful German assault on Norway, a distraught Mussolini confided to Count Ciano:

> The King would like us to enter [the war] only to gather up the broken dishes. I hope that they will not break them over our heads before that. And then it is humiliating to remain with our hands folded while others write history. It matters little who wins. To make a people great it is necessary to send them to battle even if you have to kick them in the pants. This is what I shall do.[231]

Nonetheless, Mussolini's equivocation meant that he continued to court both sides. On 19 March 1940, Ciano had confided to his diary, "I have also worked today with the *Duce* for an understanding with the Western Powers."[232] On 8 May 1940, two days prior to the German invasion of Western Europe, Ciano recorded, "The *Duce* intends to be true to the pacts that bind him to Berlin, but this does not mean that in the near future we are going to abandon our non-belligerency."[233] This sentiment was shared with the British representative in Italy, who was not comforted by the vague assurance.

Shortly thereafter, on 13 May 1940, several days after the convincing German breakthrough at Sedan, France, *Il Duce* was apoplectic. He saw his chance at a cheap victory slipping away. He proclaimed:

> Some months ago, I said that the Allies had lost the victory. Today I tell you that they have lost the war. We Italians are already sufficiently dishonored. Any delay is inconceivable. We have no time to lose. Within a month I shall declare war. I shall attack France and England in the air and on the sea.[234]

As the renowned historian Max Hasting wrote, "Italy entered the war alongside Hitler on 10 June, in a shamelessly undignified scramble for a share of the spoils. ...Benito Mussolini feared Hitler and disliked Germans, as did many of his countrymen, but he was unable to resist the temptation to secure cheap gains in Europe and the Allied African empires. ...he coupled himself to Hitler because he sought for his country a splendour he knew Italians could not achieve alone; he wanted the rewards of war, in return for a token expenditure of blood."[235]

Mussolini's new found urge for war reached the point that Ciano revealed in his diary, "He [Mussolini] fears that the English may find in it [a speech by Hitler] a pretext to begin negotiations. That would be sad for Mussolini, because now more than ever he wants war."[236] Mussolini himself insisted, "I need several thousand dead to be able to take my place at the peace table."[237] As such, he ordered his forces in North Africa to march on Egypt and later on Greece. Both efforts proved disastrous and required German intervention to rectify the embarrassing defeats.

What Have We Done? Fair-Weather Allies

By early 1942, the momentum of the war had begun to irrevocably shift towards the Allies. Italy's choice of partner suddenly seemed like a terrible mistake. As a result, on 7 March 1942, Mussolini lamented, "This war is not for the Italian people. The Italian people do not have the maturity or the consistency for a test so grave and decisive. This war is for the Germans and the Japanese, not for us."[238] The situation would only get worse.

In November 1942, the Axis forces in North Africa, led by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, were decisively defeated by the British and British Commonwealth

forces at the Second Battle of El Alamein. On 10 July 1943, the Allies invaded Sicily and nine days later they heavily bombed Rome. Sicily fell on 17 August and the Allies were now ready to invade mainland Italy.

The Axis defeats and set-backs weighed heavy on *Il Duce*. By 1943, anti-Mussolini sentiment had spread all over the country. There were mass strikes and evacuations, food shortages and due to the lack of resources, the war effort was almost non-existent. The loss of Sicily and the bombing of Rome seemed to be the last straw. The tide of public opinion turned heavily against Mussolini.

The anti-war sentiment was omni-present in the military as well. German General Paul Conrath wrote bitterly, "The Italians virtually never gave battle and presumably will not fight on the mainland either. Many units in Sicily, either led by their officers or on their own, marched off without firing a single shot ...90 per cent of the Italian army are cowards and do not want to fight."[239]

With the rapidly deteriorating situation, palace intrigue reared its ugly head. On 31 January 1943 Count Ugo Cavallero, Chief of Staff of the Italian High Command (*Comando Supremo*), who had close relations with both General Albrecht Kesselring (Commander-in-Chief South) and General Rommel, was dismissed. "Immediately," Kesselring observed, "I was aware of an atmospheric change in the *Comando Supremo*."[240] He explained:

> When Cavallero was succeeded as Chief of the General Staff by General [Vittorio] Ambrosio, formerly C-in-C of the army the situation became intolerable. The trustful relationship that had existed between Cavallero and myself deteriorated to the opposite extreme. ...Even then I already suspected – as is now sure – that the subsequent desertion of our ally was being discussed in the innermost circle of government.[241]

His suspicions were soon realized. During the evening of July 24 and into the early hours of the 25th, the *Gran Consiglio* or Grand Council of the fascist government met to discuss the immediate future of Italy. While some remained loyal to Mussolini, who appeared exhausted, if not ill, others had already set the stage for a coup. Dino Grandi, a member of the council, argued that the dictatorship was at the root of the current crisis and that it had brought

Italy to the brink of military disaster. He asserted the current regime elevated incompetents to levels of power, and alienated large portions of the population. Therefore, he proposed a vote to transfer power to the King. The motion was passed by a vote of nineteen to eight. Mussolini was uncharacteristically quiet.

Following the Grand Council, Mussolini went to see King Victor Emmanuelle III at his residence in Rome to gain his support. He would be deeply disappointed. The King, who was part of the conspiracy, revealed, "My dear *Duce*, there's no point going on. Italy is on her knees, the army has been completely defeated and the soldiers no longer want to fight for you. At this moment, you are the most hated man in Italy."[242] He then informed *Il Duce* that he had appointed Field Marshal Pietro Badoglio as the new prime minister of Italy. When Mussolini attempted to leave he was promptly placed under arrest, bundled into an ambulance and spirited away. Importantly, he was kept isolated so that he could not communicate with his supporters and former allies.

The coup quickly moved forward. The *carabinieri* and *polizia* swiftly moved to arrest Mussolini's Fascist supporters and seize key communication infrastructure, as well as command and control centres. There was neither a formal protest, nor an attempt to rescue the imprisoned dictator by his former "blackshirt" followers.

Just Trust Us: Italian Double-Cross

Kesselring learned of Mussolini's arrest late in the evening of 25 July. He requested an audience with the King but was put off until the following day. Prior to meeting with the King, Kesselring met with Badoglio who provided little new information other than what was provided in the royal proclamation. However, Badoglio insisted that "the new government would fully respect its obligations under the treaty of alliance" and that Mussolini was being held in protective custody for his own safety[243] Badoglio lied that he had no idea where Mussolini was being held, insisting that only the King had that information. Interestingly, Colonel Count Montezemolo, who was acting as Badoglio's adjutant, would go on to lead the guerilla war against Germany after the Italian surrender to the Allies.

When Kesselring later met with the King, he received the same song and dance. "His Majesty assured me," Kesselring wrote in his memoirs, "that there

would be no change as to the prosecution of the war; on the contrary, it would be intensified."[244] The King went on to inform Kesselring that he had to dismiss Mussolini because "he had lost the goodwill of public opinion." He further added that he had made the decision with great reluctance. He capped the deception by stating he did not know where *Il Duce* was being held. He asserted only Badoglio had that information.

Not surprisingly, Kesselring revealed that "Mussolini's downfall and arrest poisoned the relations of the highest German and Italian state departments. Hitler saw in this sudden turn of events no ordinary government crisis but a complete reversal of Italy's policy with the object of ending the war as quickly as possible on favourable terms, even if it meant sacrificing her ally."[245]

Hitler immediately put into motion a plan to rescue Mussolini and prepare for the Italian defection.[246] On 23 August, Hitler informed Kesselring "that he received infallible proof of Italy's treachery."[247] Subsequently, General Hermann-Bernard Ramacke's 2nd Parachute Division began landing on an airfield in Rome and shortly thereafter additional German divisions and staff began to pour into Northern Italy. Hitler had taken these steps in anticipation of an Italian double-cross.

Predictably, the Italian government and *Comando Supremo* protested the "intolerable violation" of their sovereignty. Not surprisingly they increased their combat forces in Rome by an additional five divisions. Throughout, they were reaching out to the Allies. In fact, while peace negotiations were going on, General Ambrosio attempted to subvert German forces to pave the way for an Allied intervention.[248] He demanded that the Italian 4th Army be returned from the South of France back to Italy; that all German formations in the North of Italy be placed under Italian Command and that Kesselring deploy a German division to Sardinia. "This I refused for purely military reasons," Kesselring wrote, "Even then I did not know that Ambrosio – as was proved – was aware that negotiations for surrender had already started."[249] The Germans predictably made all necessary arrangements to protect their forces and equipment for the anticipated betrayal. Orders for the necessary counter measures were in place and it was now a case of wait and see. "There was no indication on the morning of 8 September [1943]," Kesselring revealed, "that the day would be fateful for the Mediterranean theatre."[250]

The Allies, although leery of the Italian overtures were nonetheless happy to oblige. Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery later wrote:

> Eisenhower told us of the negotiations going on with the Italian Government about the armistice. The Italians had said they were fed up with the war. It seemed that at a given moment they were prepared, if we would land on the mainland of Italy, to come in with us and fight the Germans. I remarked that this looked like the biggest double-cross in history.[251]

General Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe, reflected in his memoirs:

> The Italians wanted frantically to surrender. However, they wanted to do so only with the assurance that such a powerful Allied force would land on the mainland simultaneously with their surrender that the government itself and their cities would enjoy complete protection from the German Forces. Consequently, they tried to obtain every detail of our plans. These we would not reveal because the possibility of treachery could never be excluded.[252]

The Italian demands seemed almost laughable. They had declared war on the Allies when the situation was at its darkest and the Germans had clearly conquered Western Europe and now were prepared to betray their alliance partner as the momentum had changed. Montgomery remarked, the Italians are "obviously not to be trusted one yard."[253] Moreover, they now attached unreasonable conditions to their surrender. Badoglio later explained:

> A unilateral declaration by Italy of her intentions to make peace would have meant handing ourselves over to the Germans bound hand and foot ...I appreciated the necessity of temporizing with the Germans as far as possible and at the same time doing everything in my power to get in touch with the British and Americans ...I was sure that, if I could get into touch with the Allies, I could obtain better terms than the unconditional surrender on which the English continued to insist.[254]

Despite Badoglio's rationale, Eisenhower seethed. "The Italian surrender had been dragging along," he fumed, "Finally it was agreed that the surrender

would be effective on the evening of September 8 and that Badoglio and I should simultaneously announce the capitulation." Eisenhower chose 8 September because the invasion of the Italian mainland at Salerno was to begin that midnight. Eisenhower revealed:

> Everything was proceeding according to plan when, at noon on September 8, I received a message through clandestine channels to the effect that Badoglio had reversed his decision on the ground that we were too hasty and that the result would merely mean complete domination of Italy by the Germans and the sanguinary punishment of the individuals involved. The matter had proceeded too far for me to temporize further.[255]

Eisenhower responded that he would announce the surrender regardless of Badoglio call for a delay. As such, Eisenhower announced the armistice over Radio Algiers at 1730 hours, 8 September 1943. Badoglio after whinging and delaying, finally made his armistice broadcast over Rome Radio at 1945 hours.

Epilogue

After the armistice announcement the Germans quickly moved in and occupied all strategic locations and infrastructure. They also disarmed the Italian military. In addition, after being freed by Hitler's daring commando raid at the Campo Imperatore Hotel on the Gran Sasso plateau, Mussolini became the nominal head of the Italian Social Republic. *Il Duce* did not hide the fact that he was little more than a puppet for the Nazi regime to legitimize their occupation of Italy. In conversation with a German journalist he said, "You know, as I do, perhaps better than I, that I'm a prisoner, only a simple pawn in the game... I would like nothing better than to read, and wait for my destiny to work itself out."[256]

His destiny finally caught up with him in April 1945, when he attempted to escape across the Swiss border. His convoy, including his long-term mistress, Clara Petacci, and twelve other Fascist leaders were captured by Italian partisans who summarily executed them in the small village of Giulino di Mezzegra in northern Italy. The corpses were abused and beaten by an angry mob, then hung feet first from the girders of a local petrol station where the crowds continued to throw stones and taunts at the once powerful leader. The

corpse was buried in an unmarked grave but was later exhumed and hidden by fascist sympathizers.[257]

In February 1943, Mussolini, as part of a major cabinet shuffle, sent Count Ciano as ambassador to the Holy See. In July he was part of the conspiracy to overthrow *Il Duce* and he voted for Count Grandi's motion in the Fascist Grand Council, which resulted in Mussolini's dismissal and arrest. In August 1943, the Gestapo tricked Ciano into surrendering himself and he was arrested and sentenced to death at the Verano trials, which was a special tribunal Hitler directed to be established to try those who had engineered Mussolini's downfall at the Fascist Grand Council. Mussolini issued the decree on 24 November 1943 and the trial of the nineteen accused was held 8 to 10 January 1944. Of the 19 charged, only six actually appeared in court. The others were tried in absentia. All were sentenced to death.

As for Italy, it still suffered war for another approximate 19 months until Germany surrendered unconditionally on 7 May 1945.

CHAPTER 6

CREATING CHAOS IN THE WEST

Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn

Communism has always been anathema to the West. Many saw the 1917 Russian Bolshevik Revolution as a scourge that could spread to Western Europe and North America. Countering communist expansion became a major focus in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, as well as at the end of World War I. A brief respite occurred when the Allied alliance embraced the ruthless dictator Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union in World War II, but this was borne from necessity to defeat Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime. The partnership was unsteady at the best of times, but as the war came to an end it became precarious. Quite simply, the deep mistrust, as well as the ideological and political divide between liberal democratic and communist regimes could not be breached.

The Soviets were untrusting and secretive allies throughout the war and the tension only grew as the conflict came to an end. In the aftermath of hostilities Soviet spying and territorial grabs heightened the mistrust. Not surprisingly then, an intense rivalry erupted between the two superpowers, the United States of America (and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), or Soviet Union for short (and its Warsaw Pact allies) in the post-war period. The Cold War that existed from 1946 until 1991, when the Soviet Union imploded, was marked by competition in every facet of life. Intent on not entering into a "hot war" that could spark a nuclear exchange the superpowers and their allies jousted through economic and political competition, as well as war through proxies and strategic sabotage. The goal was always to undermine the rival's credibility, international access and influence, as well as to attempt to dismantle their political and economic system. In 1967, the Soviets and their East German cohorts scored an epic coup that created chaos in the West, without their opponents actually realizing that the turmoil engulfing Western Europe was a Soviet strike.

CHAPTER 6

The Cold War

The term "Cold War" was first coined by British writer George Orwell in an article he published in 1945. In his piece he predicted that a nuclear stalemate would emerge between "two or three monstrous super-states, each possessed of a weapon by which millions of people can be wiped out in a few seconds." As such, Orwell understood the Cold War as a nuclear stalemate between "super-states," each possessing weapons of mass destruction that were capable of annihilating the other.[258] However, according to historian and foreign policy analyst James Chace, the Cold War actually started on 19 August 1946, when the U.S. refused to accept the Soviet demand that they would share responsibility for the defence of the Dardanelle Straits with Turkey. The Americans sailed a Naval Task Force into the eastern Mediterranean Sea to back up their position, demonstrating that they were prepared to go to war over the attempted continued Soviet expansionist tendencies.[259]

Although the Americans drew the proverbial line in the sand on this date, relations between the superpowers had already been on a collision course. George F. Kennan, a Foreign Service officer working in the American embassy in Moscow, explained in his famous "long telegram" on 2 February 1946, that the Soviet intransigence was a result of "internal necessities of the Stalinist regime." He insisted, "Soviet leaders had to treat the outside world as hostile because this provided the only excuse 'for the dictatorship without which they did not know how to rule, for cruelties they did not dare not to inflict, for sacrifices they felt bound to demand."[260] His analysis prompted him to conclude that there was nothing the West could do to change the Soviet mindset. Rather, the West would need to adopt a policy of containment to control the spread of communism.

The fact of the matter was that the uneasy Allied alliance during World War II between the Americans, British and other Allied states and the Soviet Union began to disintegrate before the end of hostilities. Tensions and distrust only grew once the victors attempted to make sense of the post-war world. Specifically, the Western Allies became increasingly concerned over Stalin's commitment made at the February 1945 Yalta Conference to ensure the freedom of eastern European countries liberated by the Soviets.

This commitment was further reinforced at the Potsdam Agreement, arrived at between the three major Allied powers (U.S., Britain and the Soviet Union) from 17 July to 2 August 1945. The latest accord confirmed the details of the military occupation and reconstruction of Germany, as well as its borders and the territorial boundaries of the countries in the entire European theatre of operations. It would come as little surprise then when Stalin totally reneged on his promises.

The Agreement laid out four occupation zones, one each being administered by the United States, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union. For the zones administered by the Western Allies, a process allowing for respective democratic governments to be established was quickly implemented. The same did not occur for the countries in the Russian zone of occupation. Soviet Red Army troops maintained a presence throughout these states and puppet communist regimes were eventually installed. The trend of Soviet secrecy and refusal to abide by previous agreements led Winston Churchill to deliver his famous speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri on 5 March 1946, where he proclaimed, "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an Iron Curtain has descended across the Continent."[261]

Importantly, as part of the Allied agreement, Berlin, which was seen as the political and cultural capital of Germany, despite the fact it was entirely in the Soviet zone of occupation, was also sub-divided into four sectors, each occupying power being responsible for their respective zone within Berlin.[262] The Allies deemed Berlin of such importance that they felt no one power should control the city. This decision would have later ramifications for the Cold War.

From Stalin's perspective, his failure to release his grip on the countries in his zone of occupation was a simple requirement of creating a buffer zone to prevent any future invasion of the Russian heartland. From the Western Allied view, it was the ominous communist expansion aimed at dominating Europe, if not the world. Canadian politicians voiced the general Western sentiment. "The threat of communism cast an ominous shadow over Europe and the world," Gordon Graydon, the Parliamentary Advisor to the Canadian delegation to the United Nations, insisted when speaking on the subject of Soviet intentions. He warned of the "defiant and undisguised steps toward

world domination."[263] Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and his foreign affairs minister Lester B. Pearson both went on record as stating "the international situation was never more serious."[264] Other Parliamentarians were representative of the prevailing climate, viewing communism as "a diabolical dynamic thing...aiming at the destruction of all the freedoms and the inherent hard-won rights of man" and describing it as "the darkest and direst shadow that has ever fallen upon this earth."[265]

The spiral to Cold War was neither slow nor opaque. The fear of the spread of communism in the fragile European post-war period prompted the Americans in 1947 to create the Marshall Plan, named after U.S. General George C. Marshall who was the Chief of the Army Staff during the war and who became Secretary of State under President Harry S. Truman in its aftermath. The Plan provided billions of dollars in economic assistance intended to enable reconstruction of a strong and stable Europe, which would eliminate the political instability that could open the way for communist takeovers of democratically elected governments. Stalin saw the plan as creating a strong resurgent Germany/Europe under direct American influence, a situation that could threaten the Soviet Union.

These opposing views fuelled the existing tensions. While the Western Allied powers worked at stabilizing their democratic blueprint for Europe, the Soviets worked equally hard at consolidating power. By 1948, Stalin had installed puppet communist regimes in the countries captured under the Soviet Zone of Occupation. Moreover, in response to the Marshall Plan Stalin attempted to pressure the West into abandoning Berlin. As a result, the Soviets cut off all road and rail traffic to the city on 24 June 1948. The action put approximately two million citizens in a precarious situation. In response, two days later, the U.S. and Britain undertook a massive airlift that supplied the besieged city for 231 days until the blockade was lifted in May 1949. In total, approximately 2.3 million tons of supplies transported by 270,000 flights were delivered.[266]

The fear of Soviet expansionism, particularly after the Soviets covertly overthrew the democratically elected government in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 and replaced it with a puppet communist regime spurred the creation of NATO on 4 April 1949. NATO was composed of thirteen original members and its primary goal was the mutual defence against possible Soviet aggression.[267]

World events only seemed to reinforce the need for NATO. The spectre of Communist aggression only grew. On 1 October 1949, Mao Zedong and his communist party took control of China. The following year, on 25 June 1950, Communist North Korea invaded South Korea, sparking a war that continued until an armistice on 27 July 1953. The following year French Indo-China fell to communist insurgents creating North and South Vietnam. This latest communist take-over prompted the Americans to create the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) on 19 February 1955. Much like NATO it was designed to provide mutual defence of alliance members.[268]

The departure of France from Vietnam also led to the Americans filling in the void, eventually fighting a communist insurgency in the South against Ho Chi Minh in the North, who was supported by both the Chinese and the Soviets. The war, which started slowly with American advisors providing assistance in the South in 1955, by the mid-1960s witnessed massive deployments of U.S. combat troops. The war ended with the withdrawal of the last of American forces and the fall of Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, to the North on 30 April 1975.

Although the Vietnam War was a major feature of the Cold War it was far from the only major affair. In 1959, Fidel Castro ousted the pro-American dictator Fulgencio Batista, creating a communist enclave a short 145 kilometres from the coast of Florida. Castro's relationship with the Soviet Union and his desire for Soviet protection led to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, which brought the two super-powers to the brink of war.[269]

In addition, on 13 August 1961, the Soviets began to put into place a cordon of barbed wire and armed troops, which would later be turned into a concrete wall, to separate East Berlin from the Allied administered West Berlin. In addition, troops manned all crossing points. Overnight, the Soviets closed down the freedom of passage from one side to the other. In 1962, a second barrier about 100 metres behind the original wall complete with mines was added to create a heavily policed no-man's land between the two barriers. The Berlin Wall came to symbolize the ideological, economical, and political divide between Western liberal democracies and communism. And, Berlin became the epi-centre of the Cold War.[270]

CHAPTER 6

The struggle between competing power blocks did not contain itself to Europe and North America. Throughout the Cold War a myriad of communist insurgencies and proxy wars in Africa and the Middle East stoked continuing rivalry. So too did an active campaign by both sides to discredit and weaken their rivals, including clandestine activities such as spying and strategic sabotage. A perfect example of strategic sabotage targeting the West, without its awareness, occurred in 1967. It was a single shot that reverberated for years.

A Protest Gone Bad

The 1960s in the West was marked by a seemingly global escalation of social conflict that predominately focused on agitation against the military (particularly the war in Vietnam), bureaucracy and state repression, as well as the call for greater civil rights. Mass movements, particularly university student protest, was not uncommon. For the Soviets, these protests became a viable means of criticizing the West and the failure of the liberal democratic system. After all, did the protests in themselves not act as a condemnation of the corrupt Capitalist system?

As such, student protests in Berlin in the 1960s provided unadulterated targets of opportunity. In fact, on 2 June 1967, a large student protest in West Berlin transpired to demonstrate against Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran, who was visiting Germany with his wife Soraya at the time. Germany's tabloid press was seemingly infatuated by the high-profile visitors. However, for the radical, left-wing German students, the visit represented the acceptance, if not courting, of a regime that was dubbed a "dictatorship in the free world."[271]

The protest was not a new phenomenon by any stretch. In fact, in March 1967, the German Government had passed new legislation allowing for tougher police reaction to demonstrations. For radical student and leftist groups, this latest development was just more proof that West Germany was on a road back to authoritarianism.[272] The Shah's visit to the Deutsche Oper (opera) in Berlin to attend a rendition of Mozart's "Magic Flute" would be the first real test of the new laws. The German Government did not want to be embarrassed by protests that could offend their esteemed guest.

When the diplomatic convoy arrived, approximately 500 Berlin students, who had gathered to demonstrate against the visit, hurled tomatoes and eggs

at the convoy.[273] The students railed against Iran's authoritarian regime, its terrible human rights record and the fact that the German government would welcome a dictator into the country. Heinrich Albertz, the mayor of West Berlin, gave the police clear instruction. "When I come out," he warned, "all this will be cleared up."[274]

Once inside, the diplomatic entourage was spared the chaos that soon erupted. The student protest quickly spiraled into a full-on riot when the police and Iranian agents started assaulting protestors. The students, beaten and dragged away by baton-wielding police, responded by throwing stones. Misinformation fueled the chaos. One police officer was hit in the head by a stone. Bloodied, he fled from the scene in full view of his comrades. Moreover, a rumour that another police officer had been stabbed also circulated through the ranks of the police contingent. Batons were wielded even more menacingly as a result.[275]

In the ensuing bedlam, protesters scattered into the side streets. Benno Ohnesorg, a twenty-six-year-old German student studying liberal arts, was one such individual. This event was Ohnesorg's first demonstration. When things became violent Ohnesorg fled into the courtyard of Krumme Strasse 66, a post-war building, across the street. In the pandemonium, a plain clothed police sergeant, Karl-Heinz Kurras shot the unarmed Ohnesorg in the back of the head. He collapsed to the ground and was unresponsive. Photographic journalists caught his pregnant girlfriend trying to comfort Ohnesorg while calling for help over her shoulder.[276] Although he was rushed to the hospital he died in the ambulance.[277]

A Bullet that Changed History

Kurras was later questioned by his colleagues, as well as by investigators. He claimed he shot Ohnesorg in self-defence.[278] A full autopsy and ballistic test were not conducted because the gun used in the killing mysteriously disappeared. So too, did pieces of Ohnesorg's fragmented skull. Kurras stood trial twice for reckless manslaughter but was acquitted due to a lack of evidence each time. The acquittals were somewhat surprising because there was an actual witness. Hans Brombosch lived in the ground-floor apartment in the building that looked onto the courtyard. He saw Ohnesorg enter the courtyard. "He stood there for a good long while, and it was when he went to leave

that it happened," Brombosch testified. "That was the moment when I saw the person with the pistol," he recounted, "He was standing alone, with no one in the vicinity who could have threatened him."[279] Brombosch's testimony, however, was discounted by the court because he was only eight years old at the time.

Although Kurras walked free the event was later dubbed "the shot that changed the republic."[280] Scholars claim that the killing of Ohnesorg by police in West Berlin "set off a left-wing protest movement and put conservative West Germany on course to evolve into the progressive country it has become today."[281] However, the immediate results were much more tumultuous. His shooting became the catalyst for further radicalization of the left-wing student movement against what they saw as a conservative, reactionary West German establishment. Their fears of Germany slipping back into an authoritarian state were now suddenly realized. As a result, a student movement emerged that brought together two factions, a splinter group that became the Red Army Faction (also known as the Baader Meinhof Gang), which would go on to become an infamous left-wing terrorist organization, and another group that would later morph into the Green Party.[282] Many would go on to say it was "a shot that launched a battle of generations."[283]

In fact, an early scene in the 2008 film "The Baader Meinhof Complex" used the killing of Ohnesorg as justification for its rise. The film notes, "For the student movement, the murder of a peaceful, unarmed protestor was the perfect example of the kind of authoritarian state against which they were demonstrating."[284] In essence, Ohnesorg's death served as a rallying point for the left and impelled the growth of the left-wing student movement. Rudi Dutschke, a student activist, emerged as a leader in the period after Ohnesorg's death.[285] He demanded a denazification of the West Berlin police. Additionally, he criticized the demonization of the protesters in the conservative media. He was shot the following year by a right-wing fanatic.[286]

Importantly, the killing of Ohnesorg, the seemingly wanton act by a West German policeman, fuelled further unrest and protests; galvanized left-wing radical student groups; led to the creation of the Red Army Faction (Baader einhof Gang) terrorist group in 1970, as well as the "2 June Movement" (anarchist militant group) in 1971; and discredited Western liberal democracy

in the eyes of many. For the Soviets the corruption of the Capitalist West was on display for the international community to see and judge for themselves.

Creating Chaos in the West

The Cold War began to subside during the Soviet administration of Mikhail Gorbachev. In 1986, he introduced the concepts of *Glastnost* ("openness") and *Perestroika* designed to provide economic, political and social restructuring. In essence, he attempted to democratize the political system and end the totalitarian nature of the regime. With his loosening of the reins of power and control the satellite Communist regimes in Eastern Europe began to crumble. Subsequently, democratic governments began to sprout in Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (which reunited with the Federal Republic of Germany on 3 October 1990), Hungary and Poland. Gorbachev's reforms meanwhile weakened his own communist party and the Soviet Union collapsed in late 1991. In its place fifteen independent nations, including Russia evolved. As such, the Cold War, in essence, ended as a result of a number of internal factors that included Gorbachev's reforms, a weak Soviet economy and the disintegration of the formerly occupied countries.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany created a bonanza of information for the intelligence community. The East German Ministry for State Security *(Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* (MfS)), also known as Stasi, or the East German secret police, files now fell into the hands of German investigators.[287] Two historians, Helmut Mueller-Enbergs and Cornelia Jabs, who were sifting through stacks of old Stasi files accidently uncovered information related to the Ohnesorg shooting. They discovered that Karl-Heinz Kurras was an "informal collaborator" for the MfS, as well as a member the Socialist Unity Party (SED).[288] Moreover, it appeared that Kurras had approached the MfS and agreed to spy for them as early as 1955.[289] With the 2009 revelation of the dramatic new information, the German prosecutor's office initiated another investigation into the Ohnesorg shooting. However, by November 2011, the enquiry was formally shut-down. Once again, there was a lack of sufficient evidence to justify reopening the case. Quite simply due to the lapse in time, many of the required participants were dead or unable to provide credible testimony and relevant Stasi documents were apparently among files destroyed by MfS agents when East Germany crumbled in 1990.[290]

The renewed interest did reveal some noteworthy new information. The German *Der Spiegel* magazine reported in January 2012 that research they conducted, supported by findings of the federal prosecutors, demonstrated that Kurras did not shoot Ohnesorg in self-defence, but rather it was a pre-meditated act. Moreover, newly examined film and photographic evidence indicated a police cover-up. Apparently, some of Kurras's fellow officers and superiors lied during the subsequent investigations and trials. In addition, medical staff who conducted the autopsy on Ohnesorg were ordered to falsify their report.[291]

Summary

The startling revelation almost forty years after the shooting did little to serve justice for Ohnesborg, or punish Kurras who died in 2014. However, it demonstrated how the East German Stasi, who worked closely with the Soviet KGB (or secret police), were able to clandestinely strike the West with an act of strategic sabotage. By targeting a fissure in the social fabric of not only the German Federal Republic (West Germany) but also a tension throughout liberal democracies in the West, they were able to unleash a torrent of anger and violence that caused untold social, political and economic damage. The West now had to deal with increased security concerns, an exponential rise in terrorist attacks and address criticisms of the inequalities of the liberal democratic system. And, importantly, the culprit seemingly was not the Soviets or their allies, or communism. It appeared the problem was the West itself and its political, social and economic ideology and infrastructures. With one simple shot the Soviets and their East German cohorts created chaos in the West.

CHAPTER 7

Undermining the Adversary's Narrative: Radio Broadcasts in Europe as Strategic Sabotage during the Cold War

Jordan Miller

It may seem strange to include a work about information operations in a volume about sabotage operations. In the most literal sense, sabotage and information operations conjures images of blowing up radio transmission towers, printing presses, or stocks of newsprint. Operations have been conducted for that purpose, certainly. The Bolsheviks spent considerable effort during their revolution physically destroying their adversaries' printing presses to solidify their voice in print media and undermine or eliminate competing voices. This chapter is not about physical destruction through sabotage. It is about the process of sabotaging the links between the government and the people by undermining the credibility of the government's message, and eventually its legitimacy. To be successful as a strategic tool of sabotage, information operations must be sustained over the long-term to build and reinforce a compelling narrative that the audience can personally identify with and clearly understand.

The efforts of the United States radio broadcast services during the Cold War was a method of strategic sabotage intended to undermine the credibility of Soviet Union's narrative to its own population and those in satellite states. The focus will be on the Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Liberty (RL)/Radio Free Europe (RFE) broadcasts targeting European countries, with some reference to Cuba, during the Cold War. This chapter will discuss the importance of narrative in information operations and how understanding narrative is central to crafting messages that resonate with the target audience; the

deliberate nature of targeting messages to specific audiences and; an overview of some case studies to show the impact that information operations had (or didn't have) during the Cold War. Importantly, information operations are not stand-alone activities and should be combined and coordinated with other tools of statecraft – including kinetic force in the context of war – to achieve national objectives.

Information Operations: Crafting the Narrative

A narrative is the full story that is presented to a target audience to convince them that something is true and relevant to them. The key factor that differentiates information operations from kinetic operations as a tool of strategic sabotage (other than kinetic force, of course) is the role of the target audience. Agents conducting a sabotage operation of a submarine pen, weapons research facility or key communications infrastructure do not require the consent or cooperation of the target to execute the operation. For information operations to be successful, however, the target audience *must,* firstly, understand truth in the message, and second, assign the message the appropriate significance in the context of their worldview. The target of the information operation needs to be convinced to receive and embrace the message. In the context of VOA and other American radio broadcasts, this means choosing to listen the to radio broadcasts repeatedly. This action means the target, or listener, needs to want to hear the message over and over again. For this to happen the message must carry meaning.

To be effective as a means of strategic sabotage, information operations must be based on a deep understanding of the target audience's worldview and social context in order for competing messages to undermine the government's core narrative. The sender must understand how the recipient is likely to receive, interpret and assign emotional significance to a message, and work deliberately to craft messages that will do just that. For the target to embrace the message the crafter must understand the cultural touchstones, generally held worldviews, aspirations and values, and craft messages that will resonate within that framework. The sender is not asking the target directly to embrace the message. That would be too obvious, and would likely undermine the credibility of the message. That part should be unobservable to the target. Rather, the sender is appealing to a higher sense of an individual message being truth in the context of a broader narrative.

Figure 7.1 below demonstrates the elements of the narrative and how they fit together. There are three basic elements to a narrative: 1) the core beliefs, 2) the core message, and 3) the individual messages. The narrative itself is the combination of all of these elements that, when presented correctly, resonate with the audience. Narrative is about giving meaning to the story, not necessarily an objective "truth."[292]

Though specific details help give a message credibility, the details are secondary to leaving a lasting and memorable emotional impact on the target audience.[293] In contemporary American politics, President Donald Trump is a very clear example of this phenomenon. One of the communications advisors on Trump's transition team in 2016 revealed that the President's statements should be taken seriously and symbolically, but not literally in terms of the details and figures.[294] As will become evident later, presenting messages that cannot be demonstrably disproven is vital to the success of information operations (especially when targeting authoritarians who rely on falsehoods and half-truths). The overall narrative does not have to call attention explicitly to the core beliefs to provide a premise for narrative. In well-crafted narrative the premises will be inherent, and therefore prompt the association automatically in the mind of the target audience.[295] This is the "art" of crafting effective information operations.

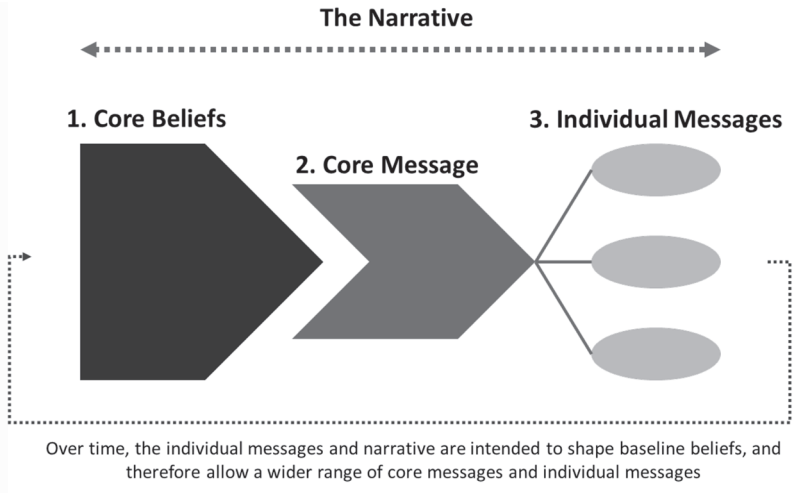

The Narrative
1. Core Beliefs
2. Core Message
3. Individual Messages
Over time, the individual messages and narrative are intended to shape baseline beliefs, and therefore allow a wider range of core messages and individual messages

Figure 7.1: Components of the Narrative

The individual messages and core messages must all align with core beliefs to make an overall narrative. All of the components need to be working together to present a cohesive chronicle for the audience. The core beliefs are unconscious or unstated – though nonetheless very central – beliefs about social order and the "way-the-world-works" that informs the target audiences' assumptions, expectations and stereotypes.[296]

Cultural history and commonly held beliefs are part of this. In the context of Afghanistan for example, Canadian service members were made aware of the importance of Islam and the Pashtun tribal code in daily life, the historic significance of previous wars fought against the British and Soviets, and other cultural items. These are examples of core beliefs that are central to any narrative. A successful narrative must resonate with the core beliefs of the audience in order to be credible.

The next layer is the core message. The core message is the broad message that is being communicated to the audience. This account can take negative or positive forms (i.e.: support X or oppose Y), and is built upon core beliefs. In the Soviet context, the core message serves the vital role of justifying the specific actions taken by the government and justifies the communist system more broadly.[297] The core messages developed by the Soviet leadership served the dual purpose of communicating the Soviet narrative to the world and communicating the correct perspective to their citizens domestically. *Tass*, an official Soviet news agency during the Cold War, presented two basic perspectives of every daily news item: the news item as evidence of the superiority of the Soviet model, or news item as evidence of the basic treachery and malevolence of the United States.[298] The individual message didn't matter – it would always be spun to the support the same narrative.

Novosti, the less official Soviet news service, produced more glossy pictures and television broadcasts to present a more modern version of the Soviet Union to the world.[299] *Novosti* was subtler, but still presented a transparently pro-Soviet message. In both cases, these outlets were controlled by the Soviet government to present a clear statement of the "right" and "wrong" perspectives on the day's news.

The messages from both were mutually reinforcing to communicate a clear, simple, coherent narrative: Soviet good, West bad. Delivering these messages,

while predictably slanted to deliver government's perspectives, was an important function for the Soviet Union and was coordinated centrally at the highest levels through the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.[300] This oversight shows the importance delivering ideologically consistent core messages was to the Soviet government. The delivery of core message is intended to clearly articulate the expectations the government has for its military and security apparatus and its citizens. The core messages reinforce the bonds between each node in the trinity discussed in the *targeting* section.

The individual messages are subsets of the core message tailored for specific demographics. This doesn't mean that all the individual messages need to be same – they will be slightly different to target specific audiences. The individual messages can be tailored to resonate more authentically with different religious groups, ethnic groups, nationalities, socio-economic classes, or trades and professions.[301] For the Soviet Union, the latitude available for individual messages is narrower domestically than internationally. The Soviet Union was an officially atheist society, making clerics a rival power centre, along with anything else they did not control. This is known from the significance of the Pope's visit to Poland to support the *Solidarity* movement, the first non-communist trade union behind the Iron Curtain.[302] The Pope's endorsement of Solidarity in a country with a strong Catholic heritage presented a dual threat of trade unions the communists did not control and the endorsement of the Pope, whose messages they could not control.

Taken together, the individual message, core message and core beliefs make up the narrative. The individual message should be factual (i.e. true), though it is more important that the individual and core messages align with core beliefs and other facts the target audience can observe around them (i.e. the individual message needs to fit in the context and resonate with core beliefs).

The mix of factual truth and emotional truth is calibrated for the individual message, with the most important characteristic that the message cannot be demonstrably disproven.[303] This requirement is a delicate balance, between messages that are false, and messages based on suggestion or interpretation where the conclusions are not demonstrably disprovable. It is simpler for the crafter of the narrative to rely on truthful messages for a few reasons,

particularly when countering authoritarian messages. First, presenting truth-based messages means they do not have to be redacted or qualified as the world changes and as new information becomes available or the actual truth becomes known. Second, truth-based messages allow the sender to retain credibility when authoritarians are telling lies at worst, or misleading information at best.

To present messaging that is demonstrably disprovable undermines the credibility of the whole narrative. There is a common classification of white, grey and black. "White" propaganda is information that is true, and harmful to your adversary's narrative. "Grey" propaganda skirts that line, taking liberties with the truth to present a more damning narrative than the raw facts otherwise show, and "black" propaganda presents information that is not truthful; however, is crafted in such a way that is it meant to be believed in the context of a particular narrative. A good contemporary example is the allegation that Hilary Clinton was involved in a child sex ring in the basement of a Washington pizza parlour. The information was false and was crafted deliberately to resonate with a broader (also false) narrative.[304] However, it was a narrative her detractors wanted to believe, thus, the message resonated with some.

A laughably inept example of failing across the entire narrative came from the Iraqis during Operation Desert Shield targeting U.S. service members. Iraq attempted to demoralize U.S. service members by telling them while they were deployed to the Saudi desert, away from home, their wives were cheating on them with celebrities like Bart Simpson.[305] This example obviously would not resonate as true on the surface, or as part of a narrative. Worse, for Iraqi propagandists, their intent was probably understood (making service members worry about home and family) by U.S. service members and seen as a very poor attempt to illicit worry or distraction.

Targeting the Population

Information operations, like any other kinetic or non-kinetic operation, are targeted and intended to generate a specific effect to meet the objectives of a campaign or strategy. To understand this in the context of information operations two models are applicable: Clausewitz's trinity, and the authority,

capacity, legitimacy model for state failure. The trinity refers to the links between the passions and hatreds of human beings that motivate war, the chance and uncertainty involved in fighting a war, and the politics that drive the purpose of war. These three factors have been re-interpreted by some contemporary writers as the links between the people, the military, and the government.[306] All three are needed to wage war. A government decides on its strategy and political objectives, raises and funds armies through taxes, and provides public services to citizens from which the army is raised. Each of corner of the trinity has a link to the other, and all are necessary to sustain war. This relationship is represented below in Figure 7.2.

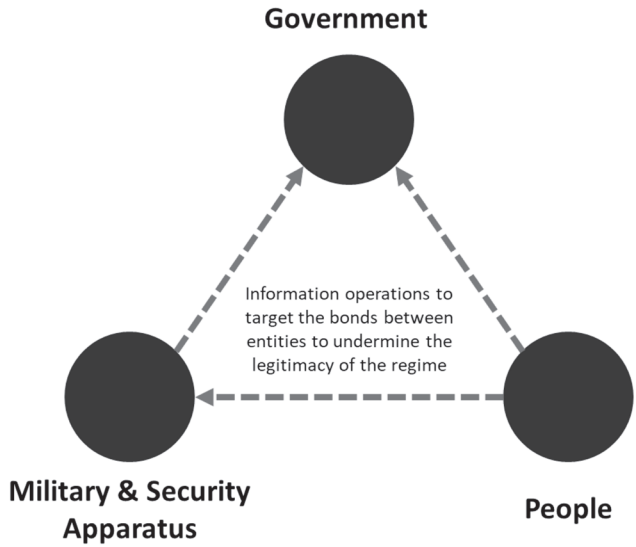

Government
Information operations to target the bonds between entities to undermine the legitimacy of the regime
Military & Security Apparatus
People

Figure 7.2: The Trinity of the Authoritarian State

The bonds that link the military and the people to the government is some mix of authority, capacity, and legitimacy. A state failure model defines the things a state needs to survive as authority, capacity and legitimacy, and when those are lacking the risk of state failure increases. Authority refers to the ability of the government to enact laws, provide basic services, and to provide security; capacity as the ability to marshal the resources of the state to run the government; and legitimacy means that the public is generally supportive of what the government does, and extends its support voluntarily.[307] Authoritarian states, for example, may have sufficient authority and capacity

to engage in wide-spread oppression, but cannot do so with the consent of the people and thus lack the legitimacy.

In the context of authoritarian states, the idea of "military" can be expanded to include the broader security apparatus like police and intelligence services. Authoritarians worry about internal enemies, and build internal security services to guard against revolution in the same way non-authoritarians tend to use their armies against external enemies. For the Soviet Union this meant the military, the KGB, the police, and a judiciary where the outcomes are highly predictable in favour of the government. This model relies on capacity and authority, not legitimacy. Legitimacy is therefore a vulnerable spot for targeting by information operations.

Information operations are non-kinetic, and as such cannot directly undermine a state's authority or capacity. They can only target legitimacy. Information operations cannot, on their own, affect the resource capacity of a state and cannot directly impact the ability of a target government to wield its authority. In authoritarian states, authority is exercised regardless of legitimacy. That's what makes them authoritarian. Information operations, therefore, can only target the perception of legitimacy in the eyes of the target group. Over time, the intent is for waning legitimacy to eventually undermine authority. The specific bonds targeted are those between the people and the government, the people and the military and security apparatus, and the individuals in the military and security apparatus and the government. As such, the American approach to undermining the legitimacy of the Soviet Union was by presenting the people with the truth and information they were not otherwise allowed to access.

The targeting of bonds between the people, the government, and the military and security apparatus is a game of *relative* gains. This means that either the Soviet narrative can be undermined, or the American narrative made to look more attractive. Therefore, messages can either attack the components of the Soviet narrative to undermine them, or promote the virtues of the components of the American narrative, or both. This approach is not necessarily a zero-sum game, though it is a question of the *differential* between the two narratives in terms of which one is more credible and appealing. In essence, the presentation of a narrative means that that account becomes fair-game

for the other side to attempt to undermine. Information operations should be targeted at specific bonds in the trinity, with a clear idea of what effect the operation is intended to generate. In the case of the Soviet Union, this meant undermining the perceived legitimacy in the eyes of the people of their government and armed forces and security apparatus, and attempting to undermine the confidence of the armed forces and the security apparatus in their leadership (military and civilian).

Unlike kinetic operations, information operations rarely target action in the immediate term. This reality is an essential difference with other sabotage operations. Sabotaging infrastructure or key military installations requires careful planning and execution of how a raid or attack will happen. The sabotage will generate an immediate effect (e.g. destruction of rail yard, or research facility) in support of broader strategic objectives (e.g. congest supply networks, or prevent the development of new strategic capabilities). Battle damage assessments provide intelligence on the immediate result of kinetic sabotage, and other intelligence sources can provide information on the strategic impact. Information operations are much more difficult to measure because information operations are generally intended to shift attitudes and opinions as part of long-term plan.

Immediate information operations can take place during time of crisis, but to be effective the audience needs to be sufficiently primed to respond to the short-term message. The difference has been characterized as the remote effect (long-term) of continuous messaging, and the immediate effect of messaging (short-term).[308] Another way to separate longer-term and shorter-term messages is the use of sub-propaganda and just propaganda, respectively.[309] Long-term exposure to narratives is intended to eventually shift core beliefs, as shown in the feedback line in Figure 7.1. The short-term effect must be rooted in the longer-term process of either undermining the adversary's narrative, building greater credibility of your own narrative, or more likely some combination of the two.

Measuring effectiveness of information operation is challenging, as the effect is intangible. The effect is generated in the minds of people and their opinions about the subject, policy, or action at hand. The mechanics of collecting this kind of information is challenging in authoritarian states for a few reasons. It

is difficult to access the population and trust they are telling foreigners the unvarnished truth. Assuming that reliable data can be collected, it is difficult to attribute changes in public opinion to a single information operation. This outcome is challenging today with the flood of digital media available to those that go looking. Longer-term trends can be measured through surveys and questionnaires, however, the same challenges of accessing the population and the reasonable expectation that they are telling the truth remains. This challenge was very difficult during the 1950s and 1960s when Cold War tensions were at their peak between east and west, although as détente began much more reliable data became available.

The Vectors

The United States used multiple radio stations to broadcast their own messages to undermine Soviet messaging, each with a slightly different purpose. VOA started in 1942 specifically to counter German propaganda in Nazi-occupied territories, and then expanded to a global enterprise after the war.[310] VOA still broadcasts today and has been the official United States global radio outlet since then. Armed Force Network (AFN) radio broadcasts were focused on Germany in the immediate post-war period, ostensibly to provide the German public information on the post-war transition and provide entertainment for American service personnel stationed in Germany. AFN retained its stated role of broadcasting to armed forces personnel, though by the late 1940s the dedicated German-language programming made it clear that German-speaking audiences on both sides of the east-west divide were also being targeted with AFN messaging.[311]

RFE and RL were ostensibly free-market radio stations founded in 1950 and 1951 respectively, however, they were secretly funded through the CIA from inception until 1971, when both were transferred to official government ownership, complete with accountability to standard Government Accountability Office (GAO) protocols.[312] Both broadcasted from Germany. RFE targeted its broadcasting on Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, and RL specifically targeted the Soviet Union.[313]

The rest of the world, including Latin American, Asia and Africa were reached through VOA broadcasts in the appropriate languages. The essential difference between VOA and RFE/RL was that VOA was an overt U.S. government

operation that promoted the U.S. vision of the world, while RFE/RL was ostensibly a free press outlet for Soviet and communist dissidents in Germany broadcasting messages to counter Soviet dogma, and was officially covert for the first twenty years of its life.[314] Both served the same general purpose: providing a fact-based counter-narrative to Soviet and communist bloc state narratives. The programming choices were slightly different, though complementary.

Undermining the Soviet Narrative

To provide a competing narrative understanding the Soviet narratives and how they were developed is important. The Soviet Union was a formidable adversary in the space of information operations and propaganda. The Soviet Union had significant experience in controlling and manipulating narratives to control their population by the time of the Cold War. The Bolsheviks early on understood the importance of being the most prominent voice and undermining competing voices, and committed the resource to do so. The Bolsheviks spent time, effort and resources securing sources of newsprint from across Central Europe and smuggling it into Russia to sustain their own news production, and took higher-risk measures like smashing or seizing their enemies' printing presses from their owners, and then intimidating the survivors into silence or killing them outright.[315] The purpose of all of this was to control what media people saw, limit dissenting voices, and present a unified message – their message – to the people. The efforts of the Bolsheviks to consolidate their power and their control over the press was not a one-time operation. Smuggled paper was consumed as it was printed, making the supply chain for paper a standing requirement.

The Soviet narrative was heavily predicated on the inherent incompatibility of the Soviet and Western systems. Classical Soviet theory as presented by Lenin saw conflict as an inevitable condition between capitalist and communist systems, that armed conflict was necessary to expand socialism globally, and that doing so presupposes more war.[316] These ideas were powerful totems that underlined the overall narrative that the Soviet system was correct and proper, and that anything to do with capitalism was necessarily wrong, improper and inferior. This illustrates the fundamental asymmetry that is necessary for propaganda to be effective. Some ideas, kinds of speech, key words and

concepts must be clearly shown as subordinate and inferior to the party line, a line enforced by the authority of the state.[317] Key phrases and words (e.g. "the people's") come to have meanings that are heavily value laden to mean "our," making membership in the in-group and out-group very clear.[318] Those kinds of narratives clearly show what the "right" message is, and therefore conversely what message is "wrong."

Turning the narrative so transparently into good and bad groups enables narratives to be targeted relentlessly against those who are bad or wrong. The totalitarian nature of Lenin and Stalin's authority prior to the Cold War is what allowed them to re-organize society, liquidate parts of it, and concentrate power with political elites and the security apparatus, allowing it to enforce the correct ideas and speech through credible threat of violence or erasure.[319]

The reliance on authority and fear to enforce narratives is exactly what frightened the Soviet Union about American radio broadcasts. Quite simply, the authority that was so effective at terrorizing the civilian population was of little use against a foreign democratic state with the means to broadcast a different perspective. American radio broadcasts undermined the Soviet narrative as much as it undermined the appearance of omnipotence of the Soviet government. In that sense, the very delivery of American radio broadcast delivered an observable narrative and a broader structural narrative about America's ability to penetrate the Soviet information monopoly.

If the Soviets understood the importance of American messages reaching them, Soviet propagandists clearly understood the idea of tailoring individual messages to reach external audiences as well. The Soviet Union engaged in so-called "active measures" campaigns to deliberately disinform foreign publics through recognized and accepted media outlets. Active measures involved the use of cut-outs and agents to "launder" false, forged, partially true or misleading information though more legitimate media avenues to provoke a reaction from the audience seeing it.[320] The idea is to seed misinformation or disinformation in smaller papers or outlets, hoping larger reputable outlets will pick the stories, thereby overcoming audience skepticism. Some notable Soviet active measures include the story that the Americans intended to develop a neutron bomb, or the allegation that the CIA developed the AIDS virus in a laboratory as a biological weapon.[321] These stories were all laundered

from fringe press into larger, more reputable outlets. These individual messages were not true, though they did align with a subset of core beliefs, specifically, that the United States was a malevolent force willing to develop new super-weapons and bio-weapons to expand their power and harm the world.

The Soviets also understood that unique personnel were needed to build and sustain the organizational capability inside the KGB for this purpose. The people the KGB selected and trained for active measures were specifically chosen based on their individual traits and then trained accordingly. Active measures officers were selected for creativity and cultural empathy to understand how to craft the right messages to target the right demographic, while simultaneously possessing the appropriate rigour, discipline and ideological firmness to ensure the messages aligned with the overall Soviet purpose.[322]

The KGB knew they needed to select individuals that had the personal qualities to understand the components of the opposing view point and how to manipulate them, without losing focus on the "rightness" of the Soviet perspective. There were many different views and histories for the KGB to understand. For instance, the Warsaw Pact alliance contained many countries with different histories, languages and cultural touchstones, making active measures officers with those personal characteristics useful within the Soviet sphere of control, to say nothing of broader applications to NATO publics.

The American narrative was mostly about providing fact-based information to the Soviet public as a counter to Soviet narratives and messages. Knowing that the Soviet Union delivered information to their public that emphasized the virtues of the Soviet system and the evils of the Capitalists, the United States opted to deliver a narrative that was pro-democracy, pro-American while also being fact-based, even if the message was sometimes negative. RFE's explicit purpose was to arm Soviet citizens with facts and figures about what was going on in the world; information they would not otherwise have, to mitigate against the "confuse-and-divide" campaign of information operations the Soviets used throughout Warsaw Pact countries.[323] The target was the link between Soviet and Warsaw Pact citizens and their respective governments, by undermining the government narrative with factual information. The Armed Forces Network (AFN) even enforced their own broadcast standards

to deliver accurate, unbiased news coverage, and would even provide stories critical or unflattering to American interests if the evidence was irrefutable.[324] The idea was that truth-based narratives would succeed on their own, by providing Soviet and communist populations with credible information they could not otherwise access.

Surviving VOA broadcasts are still available on YouTube, complete with the crackling, popping and high-pitched sounds (presumably, the effect of attempts to jam the broadcast). Broadcasts from 1960 are illustrative of showing American technological superiority, American and Soviet actions in the world, international politics, and the role of international institutions. One from September 1960, includes information about Soviet activity in the Congo and the response in the UN General Assembly, as well as the Laotian King approving his new cabinet, and the upcoming Presidential election in the United States.[325] Another from December includes the United States launching a satellite into space, the UN Secretary General visiting Congo, and reporting presidential election results from countries around the world.[326] These snapshots show two clear themes: a mix of American and global news, and reporting that presents the facts, free from hyperbole. The stories selected present a positive view of the United States and a neutral or negative view of the Soviet Union, but does so only through inference, not through direct moral statement, accusation or editorial comment. This approach demonstrates fact-based information, curated to show the best possible view of the United States. This tactic was a deliberate choice in presenting a narrative to the Soviet and satellite countries.

The central limitation of any American narrative during the Cold War was race relations and civil rights in the United States. Soviet magazines published articles about lynchings in the Southern United States, and emphasized how those arrested for lynching crimes were never found guilty and eventually released, getting away with murder because the victim was black and perpetrator white.[327] The stories were frequently true, allowing the Soviets to undermine American messages about freedom and liberty by pointing out that even in America those principles did not apply to all citizens.

As early as 1954 American officials concluded that "a lynching should be reported without comment" to allow VOA and others to acknowledge the situation in an effort to reduce the impact of Soviet counter-narratives on the subject.[328]

VOA knew this was a vulnerability in their own narrative. Soviet information operations on lynching continued, exacerbated by editorial columns in some American newspapers warning about the dangers of using federal troops to force the integration of schools in the late 1950s.[329] American actions, visible on TV broadcasts were also not helpful to the American narrative. Images of soldiers being deployed to enact civil rights measures undermined any negative American narrative about the Soviets using military power for domestic purposes. Predictably, the Soviets extended racist themes into global politics, sending racist messages to International Olympic Committee purportedly on behalf of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) with lynching imagery as a warning to African delegates that planned to attend the Los Angeles Olympics.[330] Similar messages with lynching and KKK imagery were distributed throughout Africa where the United States was trying to expand its influence, with the CIA identifying this as an obstacle.[331]

The truth of individual messages about lynching made it easier for the Soviets to construct an overall narrative about race relations in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s as a means of undermining American narratives more generally. The focus on truth-based narratives for American broadcasts, on balance, allowed the United States to deliver much more information to the Soviet and communist publics than they were liable for on race relations narratives from the Soviets. Regardless of the specifics of the balance, the American main vulnerability on truth-based narratives was Soviet exploitation of race relations in the United States as a counter-narrative. VOA recommended that rather than attempting to stifle or hide that narrative – as the Soviets did with their human rights abuses – it would be more beneficial to allow those messages to be broadcast as to prevent them from being weaponized against them later.

Information Operations

This section provides some brief examples of actual information operations conducted by the United States in the immediate post-war period from the 1950s to the 1980s.

IMMEDIATE POST WAR

VOA began deliberate targeting of the Soviet Union and its satellites in 1947 with the launch of the Russian language services, and expanded into other

European languages. It is evident that the Soviets were concerned about VOA because of the effort they spent both in jamming the broadcasts and publishing their own counter-narratives. Jamming was not always consistent, although deliberate efforts were made during political crises. The Soviets stepped up their jamming efforts on the eve of their take-over of the Czechoslovakian government in 1948[332] and began expanding their jamming capacity. By 1949, the Soviets had approximately 250 skywave and 500 ground wave transmitters that were capable of blocking an estimated 90 percent of all VOA transmissions, and anything else operating on the targeted frequency bands.[333] This counter-action was a significant infrastructure investment to block competing information. The Soviets also began counter-messaging VOA broadcasts to ensure those broadcasts that did make it through did not go unchallenged. Much of the counter-messaging during this period focused on disputing small facts like projected flour stocks in Hungary and the impact on bread prices, the appointment of communist officials in Poland, or the impacts of anticipated currency reform in Czechoslovakia and counterfeit currency in Bulgaria.[334]

At this stage the overall narrative was not being undermined, only small errors in individual messaging. The CIA took the jamming effort as confirmation that the Soviet authorities were concerned that VOA broadcasts were growing in effectiveness and impact.[335] This Soviet response was confirmation that the strategic sabotage effort was being noticed. This assessment is highly significant because the only other sources of information available to measure effectiveness were embassies, foreign agents or refugees reporting on what they witnessed before crossing the Iron Curtain.

Although it is impossible to measure the degree to which VOA messaging undermined the bonds between the government and the people at this stage, the jamming effort confirmed, if nothing else, that the Soviets perceived these radio broadcasts as a threat worth countering. Moreover, the initial Soviet counter-measures prompted two American actions that would continue throughout the Cold War: committing resources to countering Soviet jamming and stepping up intelligence collection inside target countries on the effectiveness of information operations.

CHAPTER 7

RESISTANCE: 1950s, 1960s

By the early 1950s, the hostilities of the Cold War had solidified. By then, the Soviets had proven their own nuclear capability, the Berlin airlift had taken place in response to Soviet attempts at blockade, and a war was being fought in Korea along communist/capitalist lines. The struggle was now clearly understood as a broad, system-level confrontation. VOA messages in the early 1950s focused on reminding Soviet bloc audiences about the wartime savagery civilians endured at the hands of the Soviets.[336] The narrative was extended to vilify Stalin as little more than a continuation of the worst of Hitler and Mussolini, and predicted that repression could only continue.[337] The purpose of the more aggressive message was to remind the people and the military that nothing had changed since the Second World War, to generate fear about the future and the potential for violent punishment, and to undermine faith in the Soviet system broadly[338] These messages were transparently anti-Soviet in contrast to the news-focused programming that RFE was presenting during this time.

RFE's messages were fact-based, collected from reputable Western news agencies, and were deliberately chosen to fill gaps in communist news agency reporting, based on American intelligence on what global events were being reported in by the communists and which were not.[339] The material was all factual and verifiable and the specific curation of the message was targeted to show listeners what they *were not* being told. Repeating the same messages that official communist media outlets were reporting would give the communist media outlets unwanted credibility. It would show they reported the truth, at least some of the time, and would inadvertently give those outlets some credibility. The messages were chosen by RFE specifically because they provided additional details to listeners, bolstering the credibility of RFE's broadcasts and undermining the overall credibility of communist reporting, or at very least making it clear that communist reporting was intentionally incomplete or misleading. These messages were targeted to undermine the bonds between the people and the government.

Reaching the target audience, however, still presented a challenge for Western broadcasters because of Soviet jamming. The United States wanted to out-manoeuvre Soviet jamming to give their radio transmissions more opportunity to reach listeners beyond the Iron Curtain. The "ring plan" proposed to

give the United States global radio broadcast reach, an idea unprecedented at the time. The ring plan called for six transmitters in the United States and 14 abroad, that would broadcast up to one megawatt of power each.[340] The transmitters would coordinate their transmissions and frequencies based on the target area and the activity of Soviet jammers. By the fall of 1950, it was clear the ring plan was going to face major obstacles. The challenges had less to with technical feasibility and more to do with logistical and legal issues. Some of the property selected was not suitable for building, in some cases the host government was not willing to cooperate, and purchasing or leasing the appropriate bands of the Electro Magnetic (EM) spectrum was not possible on the global scale required due to regulatory and legal obstacles.[341]

The National Security Council (NSC) began considering alternatives as obstacles to the ring plan piled up. The CIA was assigned the lead on monitoring Soviet jamming and acted as liaison to the VOA to take the appropriate measures or counter-measures.[342] The ring plan ultimately failed. It would have given the United States an advantage – at least in the short-term – over Soviet counter-measures. Without it, the CIA started collecting more information of Soviet activities to identify other vulnerabilities that could be exploited.

Despite wide-scale jamming, the United States knew that some of its broadcasts were getting to the target audience, and attempted to measure the effectiveness. This desire meant collecting intelligence in the target countries through human sources to determine the specific impact the broadcasts were having. Just like targeting in kinetic operations, targeted information operations are equally subject to exploitation and analysis of the effect in order to improve targeting for subsequent operations. The intelligence the United States collected on radio broadcasts in the 1950s varied considerably between countries, as did the actions taken by communist bloc security and intelligence authorities in response.

For instance, the situation in Czechoslovakia was much more relaxed in the early 1950s than in other Warsaw Pact countries. Listening to foreign radio broadcasts was not prohibited in Czechoslovakia, and while socially taboo to talk about listening to it openly, it meant that Czechoslovakian listeners did not need to fear official reprimand for either having a radio capable of hearing foreign broadcasts or using it for that purpose.[343] Though jamming of

American broadcasts was reported as being reasonably effective when implemented, the main complaint from human sources was that radio programming targeted at Czech and Slovak audiences was too generic and not sufficiently tailored to their cultural context.[344] This criticism is significant because it somewhat undermined the implicit assumption of the ring plan that accessing listeners was the main obstacle. The main limitation here was aligning the targeted messages with core messages and core beliefs to create a more powerful narrative that would resonate more effectively with Czech and Slovak audiences. This example underlines the importance of understanding the core beliefs in a society as the baseline for developing a narrative that will resonate with the audience.

Rumanian and Hungarian authorities were particularly concerned about American radio broadcasts, and went to some lengths to prevent them from influencing public opinion. In 1952, Rumanian authorities jammed VOA by broadcasting state radio from a tower near Bucharest for maximum effect on urban listeners, while simultaneously broadcasting messages on loudspeakers on the streets.[345] This tactic was a clear attempt to drown our competing voices. In rural areas where jamming efforts were less effective, the Rumanian communist authorities interviewed people about whether or not they were listening the Soviet broadcasts,[346] sending a clear message that Soviet messages were the "right" ones to listen to. Interestingly, the same broadcasts in Italian and Greek were not jammed,[347] though these lacked the same cultural resonance as messages in the Rumanian mother tongue, and were thus less effective as part of a counter-narrative to communist media.

Hungarian authorities were even more concerned about the impact of VOA in the early 1950s, with sources reporting on the impact VOA broadcasts were having on the links between the state security authority and the government. VOA broadcast that members of the *Államvédelmi Hatóság* (AVH – state protection authority) would not be granted immunity for actions carried out on behalf of the state in previous years. This message was significant because it did not name the crimes – it didn't have to. The target of the message, the AVH, were aware of what was being referred to. AVH agents reportedly became so concerned for their future that line officers were hesitant to take action without written orders, even on relatively unimportant cases.[348] This message was effective in that it undermined the trust between the

security apparatus and the government, if only temporarily. The Soviet response to this situation ended up confirming concerns of Hungarians at home and abroad. The KGB allegedly intervened in the mail system, limiting the number of letters Hungarians could send to non-communist countries to three letters per year. They then engaged in such a comprehensive program of opening and reading Hungarian mail sent anywhere abroad that the recipients noticed and reported delays.[349] The purpose of jamming VOA broadcasts was to limit external voices and to amplify the party line. The mail investigation campaign was intended to do the same, though in the process effectively confirmed their concerns to the population and to expatriates (as evidenced by the intelligence reporting). This indicated to the United States that VOA broadcasts were having an impact on the bonds between the people and the security apparatus and their government, at least for a short time.

Nonetheless, radio broadcasting from abroad has clear limits. The CIA's after-action review on RFE's role in the Hungarian revolution of 1956, is illustrative of the limits. Prior to the revolution, the Soviets presented the standard messaging about RFE, headquartered in Munich. They claimed it was a neo-fascist cut-out seeking to foment counter-revolution in Hungary.[350] The CIA interviewed Hungarian refugees involved in the revolution that fled after the Soviets intervened. They expressed disappointment that they were encouraged by both VOA and RFE to take up arms against the Soviets, and understood Washington's diplomatic language of concern about the situation as promises that America would act to support the gains of the revolution, either through the UN or more robustly through NATO.[351]

This impression was solidified in the mind of many would-be revolutionaries because the Soviets broadcast false-flag messaging, claiming to be VOA and RFE when it fact it was Soviet messaging intended to whip up revolutionary fervour and therefore provide additional justification for intervention.[352] The Soviets effectively hi-jacked the credibility that RFE and VOA had with the Hungarian population, and broadcast more pointed messaging to would-be revolutionaries to exacerbate tensions to justify the Soviet decision to intervene. RFE issued a press release denying any involvement in the false Soviet broadcasts after the fact,[353] but by then the damage had been done.

The tactic of changing frequencies and timing to avoid Soviet jamming was also used against the United States. Jamming actual VOA and RFE broadcasts

created an impression of occasional unreliability in the minds of listeners. They accepted this as part of listening. With VOA and RFE changing frequencies and transmitters to avoid Soviet jamming,[354] a stroke/counter-stroke dynamic was effectively created, with each side trying to stay one pace ahead. This dynamic created the opportunity for the Soviets to engage in false-flag broadcasts, with listeners expecting the broadcasts to change frequencies or timing. The ability to verify the authenticity of a broadcast was undermined by the need for the United States to keep changing up to avoid Soviet jamming.

For example, the Soviets intentionally timed and aligned their fake messages with legitimate American diplomatic messages, hoping that Hungarian revolutionaries would turn to arming and preparing for violence with the expectation of American assistance. The reports from refugees above indicate that enough of them believed these messages to act on them, in turn providing the justification for intervention the Soviets sought all along. The Soviet false-flag messages aligned enough with the genuine core American narrative – or was believably aligned in the minds of the audience – to be taken as genuine. In addition to hijacking the American airtime they also hijacked the narrative by inserting their own messages for their own purposes.

It is not clear if the Hungarian incident informed later American hesitance to support insurrections with VOA broadcasts. The case of the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, shows an American failure in strategic sabotage through information operations. There was no real effort by the VOA or any other American media outlet to undermine the Cuban government's narrative,[355] leaving the people to listen only to the Cuban government account. The subsequent and highly publicized failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion not only handed Fidel Castro a propaganda victory, but escalated tensions between East and West and gave the Soviet Union some justification for fortifying their foothold in Cuba. Kennedy acknowledged the failure, acknowledged that American military power would not be used directly to overthrow the Cuban government, and attempted to use this as evidence of the need to maintain the struggle against Castro and communism more broadly.[356] According to Robert McNamara (then Secretary of Defence) in *The Fog of War,* the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion was assumed by American decision-makers as an contributing factor to Soviet decision-making during

the Cuban Missile Crisis as negotiations were underway.[357] The overall failure of the Bay of Pigs ended up priming future escalations.

The failure to shape the public in 1961 meant the Cuban population was most likely unaware of the upcoming invasion and therefore could not prepare for how they would respond. There was some measure of learning from this process for senior leaders in the United States. VOA committed many resources and transmitters to saturating Cuban airwaves with VOA broadcasts during the Cuban Missile Crisis in a clear attempt to reach Cubans directly.[358] It is not clear how effective this operation was in swaying Cuban public opinion or what the objective was. As the *Fog of War* makes clear, negotiations on the issue of missile emplacements was solely between the Americans and the Soviets. There was no plan to resume a Cuban-led invasion in 1962 either. The military options during the Cuban Missile Crisis were clearly biased toward overt American air strikes and a land invasion, with Soviet retaliation anticipated in the face of any American attack. As an act of strategic sabotage, American radio broadcasting into Cuba was absent when most needed during the Bay of Pigs, and then saturated during a time when the struggle was larger than Cuba alone.

The remainder of the 1960s showed that jamming of American radio broadcasts closely mirrored flashpoints in the American-Soviet relations. In June 1963, jamming of VOA and BBC was relaxed as a sign of goodwill after the Cuban Missile Crisis, and resumed again in 1968 after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.[359] Two things are notable here. Firstly, the escalation in the situation in Vietnam in the Gulf of Tonkin did not change the situation, and neither did the escalation of land battles between 1964 and 1968 period. America's Cold (small) War(s) did not impact the Soviet perception of the need to constrain American information flows in the Soviet Union. Second, that the invasion of Czechoslovakia – like the invasion of Hungary in 1956 – was clearly perceived as an informational threat to the Soviet Union, prompting a resumption of jamming that lasted until 1973.[360] Clearly, the Soviets took American broadcasts very seriously in the early 1950s, though after their master stroke in Hungary, they relaxed their emphasis on jamming. The only escalation in jamming after Hungary was during and after Czechoslovakia in 1968, an action tied directly to reduce risks to the Soviet intervention there. The Vietnam war does not appear to have a been a factor in Soviet calculations on European

radio broadcasts during the Cold War. The death of Stalin in 1953 and Khrushchev's push for reforms likely informed this shift, along with more clear-eyed examinations of the impact of American broadcasts. By the early 1960s, the Soviets had weathered interventions in Czechoslovakia (1948) and Hungary (1956), the Berlin blockade, the Cuban Missile crisis and the Korean War. It is more likely that the Soviets felt less threatened by American broadcasts by the 1960s than they had at the start of the Cold War, with the notable exception of limiting intervention in large scale military action like Czechoslovakia in 1968.

COMPETITION: 1970s AND 1980s

In the late 1960s it became known that the CIA was the funding body for both RFE and RL. The CIA assessed that if they ended both broadcasts it would leave a noticeable hole in their information operations profile, both for communist governments who would gloat at the demise and claim their own propaganda victory, and for the populations who would miss listening to it.[361] RFE and RL did not, therefore, cease to exist, although ownership and leadership was transferred formally to the government in 1971.

VOA came under scrutiny in the early 1970s as President Richard Nixon sought détente with China and the Soviet Union to reduce the tensions of the Cold War. As a result, Congressional committees recommended reducing the funding and programming time of VOA in 1971 on the justification that VOA broadcasts were sometimes provocative to America's adversaries, and in the interest of building better relations the volume of programming should be scaled back.[362] This argument is exceptionally telling in terms of what some lawmakers thought VOA was achieving. Although programming was largely fact-based and presented a generally positive impression of the United States, even this was perceived as being provocative. Offering to voluntarily reduce the volume of VOA broadcasts was an assumption on behalf of American lawmakers that broadcasts were have an effect on Cold War tensions. The committee proposal was rejected, and VOA continued broadcasting around the world, expanding their capacity to 45 high-powered (>200kW power) transmitters, up from just two in 1962.[363]

The most significant impact of détente on American radio broadcasting into the Soviet Union was the relaxation of rules allowing Soviet and communist

bloc citizens to travel abroad. From 1972 to 1990, the Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research Unit (SOOAR) at RFE/RL conducted over 50,000 survey interviews with Soviet citizens travelling to the West.[364] It is possible that because of respondent hesitancy from Soviet citizens answering questions about listening to Western radio that the actual figures were even higher. The deviation in the dataset is unknowable, although the findings are encouraging on their own. The SOOAR was interested in how many people Western radio broadcasts generally were reaching in the Soviet Union, their motivations for listening, age, education, etc. to attempt to develop the more comprehensive picture possible of who they were reaching and why.

Research showed that between 1970 and 1972 about 6% of Soviet citizens were listening to VOA, 2.8% were listening to RL, and 1.5% were listening to BBC World Service daily, with those numbers rising to 23% for VOA, 11% for RL and 5% for BBC World Service on a weekly basis.[365] These results mean that roughly one in eleven Soviet citizens was listening to either VOA or RL daily and roughly one in three were listening weekly. This outcome is an impressive rate of uptake of foreign news in an authoritarian country that was jamming transmissions, and partially explains why the Soviets kept up the effort.

The other important trend in the data that SOOAR found was that the VOA audience was overwhelmingly young and urban and even split between men and women, while RL was generally older, rural, better educated and more likely to be the Soviet republics and not Russia.[366] Part of this is explained by the programming and languages available. VOA carried more entertainment programming more likely to appeal to younger listeners, while RL carried more news, cultural and political programming and broadcast in more non-Russian dialects (e.g. Ukrainian, Baltic languages, Central Asian languages, etc.)[367] In both cases, it can be safely assumed that regular listeners were tuning in because they were finding programming they could not access through other means (i.e. Soviet or communist bloc radio), whether for entertainment or for news and culture.

The idea that Soviet citizens were accessing programming because it was otherwise unavailable is supported by data from 1985, asking listeners what their motivation was for listening. The survey question allowed listener to give multiple answers. 77% claimed they listened to Western broadcasts to get the

latest news, 70% to access information that was otherwise unavailable, 62% to learn about the outside world, 39% to verify information they received from other means, 20% for entertainment programming, 13% to hear the official Western government lines, and 8% to know the adversary.[368]

This data is highly illustrative. The top three answers are all some version of accessing information that is reliable or not available, and with the next most likely answer explicitly about cross-checking the official Soviet line against other information. A data subset about RL only between 1975 and 1986, showed that over 80% listened for news, about 80% listened for information about the Soviet Union, between 35% and 60% listened to hear stories of *Samizdat* (internally produced material that was banned by the Soviet government) that were smuggled out of the Soviet Union and broadcast back in by RL, and between 45% and 60% listened for political analysis. This data set from over ten years shows clearly that there was an appetite among Soviet listeners for media other than the party line.

This indication is highly significant because it serves as an implicit confession that Soviet citizens knew they were not being told the whole truth, were curious to know more, and that most listeners listened for that purpose. Also significant was the fact that Soviets were still seeking information from Soviet sources. A 1978 survey question asked about what news source Soviet citizens accessed as their primary source for national and international news. Roughly 55% said they accessed state TV, roughly 50% accessed state newspapers, 40% accessed state Radio, roughly 30% accessed state Agitprop meetings, and roughly 30% accessed Western radio.[369] This question did not ask about frequency; only what the primary source choice was. This outcome means roughly a third of Soviet citizens listened to Western radio as their primary choice. Interestingly, being a member of the communist Party was not a predictor one way or another. Members and non-members were equally likely to listen to Western radio broadcasts,[370] meaning even those citizens more engaged in the political system of the Soviet Union were listening to Western broadcasts ahead of Soviet ones.

The data presented above demonstrates that information was reaching people, whether party members or not, as part of a broader media diet. Soviet citizens were listening to Western radio in order to fact check Soviet

sources and increase their own awareness about the world. On their own, these items have value. It means that Soviet citizens listening to Western radio were at the very least skeptical of the party line and at best open to having their minds changed or to consider an alternative perspective. Western narratives targeting the link between the Soviet population and government were clearly having an impact. The data shows that people were listening for the specific messages, implying they were open to believing the core message also.

The findings above are about general listening. The remainder of this section addresses specific events. The SOOAR study provides a few discrete examples that underline the effectiveness of Western radio broadcasts in changing minds. The SOOAR data set includes specific data for Soviet public responses to Union's action in Afghanistan, the downing of a Korean Air Lines (KAL) flight, the incident at Chernobyl, and the Solidarity movement in Poland. The findings show that those who regularly listened to Western radio broadcasts including VOA and RFE/RL were much more likely to disapprove of aggressive Soviet policy. The notable exception is the case of Solidarity, where the Soviet Union went to great lengths to jam Western broadcasts and actively present a counter-narrative that resonated with existing core beliefs.

The table below shows the approval rates of Soviet government policy on Afghanistan and the KAL incident. The Afghanistan and KAL cases clearly show that listening to Western Radio was correlated with higher rates of disapproval for Soviet actions. In both cases, this was likely the result of Western radio broadcasts providing more information and more facts than Soviet outlets. In Afghanistan, communist bloc journalists often presented stories to American media outlets instead because the Soviet media outlets treated most information as state secrets, even after they had been published in the United States.[371] In this context, straight facts carried more weight than the party line.

	LISTEN TO WESTERN RADIO		DON'T LISTEN TO WESTERN RADIO	
	1984	**1987**	**1984**	**1987**
Afghanistan	Approve 15% Disapprove 47%	Approve 11% Disapprove 65%	Approve 45% Disapprove 17%	Approve 33% Disapprove 44%
Korean Air Lines	**1985** Approve 22% Disapprove 47%		**1985** Approve 70% Disapprove 11%	

Table 7.1: Soviet Citizen Approval/Disapproval of Government Policies, and Radio Listening Habits.[372]

In the case of Chernobyl, 36% of Soviet citizens received their news from Western sources, 28% from Soviet TV, 18% via Soviet radio and press, 15% via word of mouth, and 2% through Agitprop meetings.[373] Though Western broadcasts were not the majority source, they were the most frequently cited source for information. Western information was timelier and more accurate that the Soviet party line, and thus more attractive. Swedish nuclear workers 1,100 km away were the first to notice elevated radiation levels and initially believed their nuclear facility was malfunctioning until further investigation showed another facility was responsible for the radiation event.[374]

The Soviet information that did come out was two days late, inconsistent and often contradictory,[375] indicating that the Soviet authorities had not fully committed to which version of the story they were going to share with public. This situation is the ideal context for Western radio broadcasts to establish credibility over Soviet sources because they were reporting the facts in real-time, not managing the message of the least-worst version of a nuclear accident they could put together. In this case, Western radio broadcasts were more effective because of an attempted Soviet cover-up that failed, yielding the initiative to any other source providing reliable, accurate information.

CHAPTER 7

The case of the Solidarity movement in Poland in the early 1980s is an interesting case because it shows how the Soviets effectively controlled the narrative through jamming and declaring martial law. In 1977, the administration of President Jimmy Carter expanded its broadcasting capability with even more transmitters on the advice of National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski that growing discontent in the Soviet sphere needed to be nurtured with more American radio broadcasts.[376] Consistent with the customization of messaging, VOA began broadcasting some religiously focused messaging, drawing parallels between the Romans and Soviets as oppressors of faith, broadcasting in 42 different languages including Polish.[377] America was clearly escalating their campaign and tailoring narratives to the religious histories of Soviet spaces where religion in general was counter to the party line.

In late 1980, labour tensions escalated in Poland to the point of strikes. Solidarity, the first non-communist approved labour union declared a six-week general strike in November 1980 and further strikes in January 1981, leading to a flurry of activity between Polish security officials, the KGB and Soviet military leaders about how best to address Solidarity.[378] By late 1981 the situation had escalated significantly. In mid-December 1981 sit-in factory strikes and no-shows escalated to the point where 10 Polish Army divisions were activated to enforce martial law, with the threat of action of Soviet troops stationed in Poland.[379] The Polish President declared martial law himself in that hopes that it would prevent a repeat of Soviet intervention similar to Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968,[380] and Afghanistan only two years prior. Polish security forces arrested Solidarity members and threatened to arrest more, with Soviet media outlets explicitly linking the unrest to Western radio broadcasts.[381] Soldiers and security personnel were in the streets, making arrests, and the Soviets were blaming Western radio for the escalating the situation.

Special emissaries of Pope visited Poland to lend their support, and were assaulted and arrested in the streets along with Solidarity strikers in the week after martial law was declared.[382] Soviet news agencies continued to showcase the role of external forces like Trotskyites, foreign intelligence services, and NATO in an effort to use Poland as an infection incubator for socialism globally.[383] Invoking Trotskyism is particularly noteworthy. Trotsky had been a prominent revolutionary during the early days of the Soviet Union, until he

and others were pushed out in the mid-1920s and immediately vilified by the Bolshevik leadership who undoubtedly orchestrated the ejection.[384]

This attribution is significant because one man's name was referred from over 50 years prior, and the target audience most likely understood exactly what message was being sent. Invoking the image of Trotsky entreats the image of someone who was once on the inside, but was removed under accusations of insufficient ideological purity or commitment. The core beliefs about who and what Trotsky represented was assumed in the development of that message. Regardless of the nuance, the placement of Trotsky in a narrative in the 1980s indicates the importance of Soviet revolutionary history in public discourse and core beliefs and the gravity of allegations of insufficient loyalty. This approach presented a narrative Soviets knew would be understood. Tying Trotsky to NATO and foreign intelligence extends this image of treachery to being in the service of external forces, not domestic ones.

Nonetheless, Solidarity fought back in early 1982, directly targeting the bonds between the armed forces and the government by calling on soldiers to refuse orders to arrest civilians. These efforts were not successful beyond a few isolated cases, though Solidarity's efforts clearly struck a nerve with the Polish government. The Minister of the Interior warned against such actions in his new year's message, and *Pravda* began reporting that Polish soldiers were joining the Communist Party at record rates.[385] Regardless of whether or not this was true, the message was clear: Solidarity is equated with the West and is bad, supporting the Soviet and Polish government cause is good.

Concurrently, the Soviets were actively jamming Western broadcasts to limit external voices. However, the jamming was not particularly effective in terms of the number of listeners prevented from listening to Western radio. Jamming reduced the total listening of Western radio from about 25% to 22% of the Soviet population during this time.[386] Notably, Soviet public opposition to Solidarity increased significantly from 1980 to 1982, from 46% initially opposing to 71% opposing by 1982.[387] The Soviet Government messaging was clearly more effective than Western radio broadcasts during this period. Soviet messaging relied on three key themes: the dangerous and counter-revolutionary nature of strikes; the threat to national security presented by the Poles; and stoking latent Soviet mistrust of Poles as a national identity question.[388] This

is an effective example of the Soviets presenting a more compelling narrative than the West. The jamming did not appreciably reduce the number of people listening, but the Soviet narrative clearly tapped into core beliefs more effectively than the American message. The Soviet narrative was therefore more compelling that the Western one.

During this period, listening to Western radio broadcasts was commonplace, and was done to access information not available elsewhere. The Soviet government did not appear to be particularly concerned with these broadcasts, except during time of crisis like KAL, Chernobyl and Poland. In the case of KAL and Chernobyl, decades of reliable Western broadcasting had clearly shifted the willingness of the Soviet population to believe Western radio. In the case of Poland, however, reliance on classical Soviet counter-revolutionary narratives was effective, irrespective of the jamming efforts that did little to reduce listenership. The Solidarity case clearly show the limits of information operations as strategic sabotage when trying to undermine highly resonant counter-narratives that tap into core beliefs more effectively.

Conclusions

The cases above demonstrate some lessons on the use of information operations as tools of strategic sabotage. The clearest lesson that emerges is that information operations take a long time to undermine the bonds between the people and the government. Developing an effective counter-narrative means having an understanding of where the adversary's narrative is vulnerable. The successes of American radio broadcasts reaching Soviet audiences in the 1970s and 1980s took years to achieve, and was built on providing reliable, fact-based reporting. Although there was significant response from the Soviet authorities to Western broadcasts in the early 1950s it is not clear if Western broadcasts were actually shifting attitudes in place such as Hungary, or if the Soviet response was an over-reaction based on worst-case planning.

What emerges from the given examples is that America faced layers of asymmetry in accessing Soviet and communist bloc audiences. In times of crisis such as in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland the early 1980s, the Soviet's heavy-handed military and security response was something that American radio broadcasts could not compete with. Radio broadcasts targeted

Soviet legitimacy in the eyes of the people, seeking to undermine the bonds between the people and government. In the face of martial law, arrests and reactionary tactics the authority and capacity of Soviets overwhelmed any concerns about legitimacy. Fact-based broadcasts lacked any connection to action by the people when they faced the threat of physical violence or arrest and long prison sentence, which were playing out on the streets in real time.

The asymmetry in this case is linked directly to America lacking a military footprint in the Soviet Union with which to exercise capacity and authority. The United States did not have any capabilities – that it, physically located – in the Soviet Union other than radio waves and its embassy. The Soviets had their military and security apparatus, courts to try and sentence "enemies of the state," and an effective monopoly over everything but the airwaves (though they did try, unsuccessfully, to maintain it through jamming). This reality is the nature of authoritarian societies. This means the only tools available to the Americans was changing the timing and frequency of their broadcasts and shifting the narrative to evolve with changing world events and context. The Soviets had many more means at their disposal to limit debate and dissent than the United States had to provoke and encourage it. The limits of what the Americans could achieve is clearly illustrated in the case of Poland and Solidarity. The Soviets use of their own counter-narrative was highly effective in shifting Soviet public opinion away from sympathy with Solidarity and the idea of greater freedom for Poland.

The asymmetry of Cold War information operations is not an inherent feature of information operations themselves. The Soviet Union used propaganda extensively to influence their population, backed by the authority of the state for those that violated authoritarian norms. This situation makes the uptake of American narratives – even if not all the time – all the more impressive because those broadcasts were correlated with lower approval rates for government policy. The fact that communist party members listened at the same rate as non-party members indicates the American effectiveness over time despite the asymmetry.

Clearly, the American use of radio was effective because it matched the means of communication and the narrative. Soviet and communist bloc citizens listened to the radio before VOA started broadcasting and received much of

their information from their governments via these means. The radio was everywhere, thus providing a ready means for people to receive American messaging. It is also why jamming took up so much Soviet time, resources and effort.

Crafting the narrative is essential to changing the audience's mind, however. To be successful, the narrative must be transmitted via means the audience already uses, and uses by choice. Without this match, information operations will fail.[389] This relationship is also true today with the ubiquitous use of social media as an effective means of engaging with your target audience.

Finally, information operations neither led to the end of the Soviet Union, nor did they likely hasten its demise. By the spring of 1989, the Soviet Union was in an economically untenable position, the promises of *glasnost* and *perestroika* set expectations higher than the government could reasonably achieve in a timely way, and the Soviet army had just withdrawn from Afghanistan in defeat.[390] Larger international geopolitical factors and domestic and economic and political factors were too much for the Soviet Union to endure. However, throughout the Cold War the American use of information operations, through radio broadcasts, prompted significant responses from the Soviets. Radio broadcasts were something that could not be ignored, and were not ignored, costing the Soviets time and resources. The reliable base of listeners in the Soviet Union shows the real benefit of this strategic information operation. The American narrative was coherent enough to attract a significant portion of the population to listen regularly, undermining the credibility of the party line in the eyes of many Soviet citizens. It is therefore somewhat fitting that during the attempted coup against Boris Yeltsin in 1991, about 30 percent of Muscovites later reported to the Russian government in survey questions that they listened to RL as their main source of information, with rates as high as 70 percent among media and cultural professionals.[391] The reporting from RL had developed a solid reputation as being credible and fact-based by those who listened. So much so, that during a time of attempted coup, a foreign radio station became the most reliable source of information for hundreds of thousands of Russians.

CHAPTER 8

THE CIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR: AN ANALYSIS OF SUCCESS

Nicholas Ramsay

"We took the means to wage war, put them in the hands of people who could do so, for the purposes for which we agreed."[392]

The Cold War saw a never-ending slew of strategic sabotage between United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), commonly referred to the Soviet Union. The Capitalist West and the Communist East tried to out manoeuvre each other in an international game of espionage, coercion, interference, and deterrence. By the 1980s this game had been played for 40 years with no winner in sight. Both sides had seen victories and defeats of various magnitudes. The United States saw its foremost defeat during the Vietnam War, a decade-long conflict that consumed an inordinate amount of men and material, and tarnished the political reputations of multiple American presidents and military leaders. Conversely, the Soviet Union had not experienced such a profound public defeat on the scale of the Vietnam War. That would change in 1979, when the policy-makers in Moscow decided to intervene in Afghanistan.

There are several contributing factors on why the Soviet Union ultimately lost the war in Afghanistan. None are as infamous or controversial, however, as the U.S. supplying the Mujahideen with the Stinger anti-air weapons system. Though providing these weapons did not single-handedly win the war for the Mujahideen, it did make a significant positive impact on the Mujahideen's ability to counter Soviet power. This act of strategic sabotage, executed by

the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) helped change the course of the war in favour of the Mujahideen. The Soviet-Afghan War became a protracted conflict through this clandestine operation, forcing the USSR to commit more men, material, and more importantly, money, into the engagement. The USSR could not afford to lose these resources at this point in the Cold War.

Background

In April 1978, a Marxist militant group led by Hafizullah Amin overthrew the Afghani government and installed a communist dictatorship. Ruling through fear and violence, Amin quickly lost control of the country. With a growing Islamic insurgency spreading throughout the country, led by the Mujahideen, Amin requested military help from his communist neighbour and ally, the Soviet Union. The USSR, seeing a total collapse of the Communist government in Afghanistan as imminent and fearing that an Islamic revolution could spill over into Muslim areas within the Soviet Union, decided to intervene militarily.[393]

As a result, in December 1979, the Soviet Union launched an all-out invasion of Afghanistan with a focus on the major population centres. Such a bold operation shocked both the Western and the Muslim world. U.S. President Jimmy Carter called the invasion "the greatest threat to peace since the Second World War."[394] Almost immediately the United States decided to aid the Mujahideen in a bid to force the Soviets out of Afghanistan, or at the very least, to lock the Soviets into a protracted conflict.

Carter saw the invasion as a play to increase Soviet influence in the region, with the ultimate goal of reaching the warm water ports in Pakistan or even to link up with pro-communist groups in India.[395] If the Soviets were successful, they could disrupt the flow of oil coming out of the Persian Gulf, on which the U.S. was heavily dependent.[396] To prevent this, President Carter tasked the CIA to organize financial and military support for the Mujahideen, which was the only major military force in Afghanistan capable of countering the Soviets.

The CIA planned to leverage the existing indigenous force and arm and train them in order to achieve their national security objectives.[397] This initiative led to the creation and implementation of Operation Cyclone. Unknowingly

at the time, the Americans embarked on the largest and most expensive CIA operation in the agency's history.[398]

Just fourteen days after the invasion, the first shipment of arms, organized by the CIA, arrived in Afghanistan.[399] Initially, to avoid any obvious ties to aiding counter-Soviet groups, the United States commenced the operation by supplying the Afghan fighters with non-American made weapons, mostly from the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries. To do this, they turned to Israel, which due to their recent wars with multiple Arab nations had an abundance of captured Eastern European-made weapons.[400]

A surprising unofficial coalition soon began to take shape to maintain plausible deniability for the United States. Pakistan and China, who wanted to limit Soviet expansion in their spheres of influence provided arms, funding and safe haven for Afghan rebels. Saudi Arabia and Egypt, were outraged by the invasion of their fellow Islamic ally provided weapons and personnel.[401] Israel, who needed to bolster its economy after two recent wars, agreed to sell their outdated stock pile of Eastern European-made weapons to the United States. Egypt and Israel, who had waged a deadly war against each other only six years earlier unknowingly had entered into a clandestine alliance. Soon after, weapons and funding started to funnel through the Pakistani intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), into Afghanistan. For the rest of the conflict, the ISI would dominate all operational control of the operation, ranging from the distribution of arms and money to setting up training facilities among the refugee camps along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.[402]

Throughout history, the tribes of Afghanistan had been very difficult to subdue. From Alexander the Great to the Persian Empire to the colonial British, each had considerable problems subjugating the various groups, earning Afghanistan the nickname "the graveyard of empires."[403] A defining factor in the failed attempts to conquer the area is the rugged terrain. The deep valleys and impassable mountain ranges make manoeuvring large formations impossible. Therefore, Soviet Union was forced to take two approaches. The first was to move men and material via long, narrow, winding roads that snaked throughout the various mountain passes. These routes were treacherous at the best of times, not to mention an ambusher's paradise for waiting Mujahideen long

steeped in such tactics. The second approach was to rely on air power for logistical mobility and offensive operations.

In major urban centres and where the terrain allowed, the Soviets established air bases. From these bases, helicopters would move men, material and conduct assault missions, to offset guerrilla mobility. This tactical approach was similar to the American forces in Vietnam. The limited capabilities of the Mujahideen meant the Soviet Union had complete air superiority within the battlespace. This superiority allowed the Soviets "to provide fire-power, reconnaissance, convoy security, tactical lift, mining, ambushes, and dismounted operations" at will.[404]

The Mujahideen did not have an abundance of anti-air weapons as well as the terrain did not allow for easy transportation of any large calibre weapons. Weapons such as the Swiss-made Oerlikon 20mm cannon, which the U.S. had initially considered supplying the rebels in order to maintain plausible deniability, were eventually ruled out because it was too heavy for transportation.[405] As such, the Soviet air force could pursue the Afghan fighters into the mountains with little fear of retaliation against their heavily armed Mi-24 Hind attack helicopters.[406]

By the mid-1980s, money and material had been flowing into Afghanistan at an increasing rate, however, the Mujahideen were not making tangible progress.[407] The Americans realized the need to escalate their support if they were to halt Soviet aggression. On 27 March 1985, President Ronald Reagan signed the National Security Decision Directive 166 (NSDD 166). In it, Regan set the following goals in Afghanistan:

- Demonstrate to the Soviet Union that its long-term strategy for subjugating Afghanistan is not working.
- Deny Afghanistan to the Soviets as a base.
- Promote Soviet isolation in the Third and Islamic worlds based on the Afghanistan issue.
- Prevent the defeat of an indigenous movement that is resisting Soviet aggression.
- Show firmness of purpose in deterring Soviet aggression in the Third World.[408]

To facilitate achieving these goals Reagan authorized the CIA to actively take all means necessary to force a Soviet withdraw. A large increase in funding was authorized along with a myriad of other programs.[409] By March 1986, Reagan had authorized the CIA to supply the Mujahideen with sophisticated "made in America" weapons.[410] The Stinger missile would now be sent to Afghanistan. The plausible deniability of the sabotage operation was sacrificed to escalate the conflict and ensure Soviet defeat.

Operation Cyclone

The FIM-92A Stinger missile was a shoulder mounted anti-air weapon that could be operated by one person. The most effective portable anti-air weapon of its time, its warhead had a heat-seeking "fire-and-forget" ability, meaning the training requirement necessary to use it were minimal.[411] This weapon system was easy to operate and with a weight of only 35 pounds it was light enough to carry through the difficult mountainous terrain of Afghanistan. These missiles were remarkably effective against helicopters, which were the main transport and assault vehicle of the Soviet air force during the war.

Supplying the Mujahideen with an obviously American-made weapon did come with significant risks. If the USSR discovered the CIA's involvement in actively trying to subvert Soviet forces in Afghanistan it could cause major international tension. As retaliation the Soviet Union could provide Central American rebels similar anti-air weaponry to be used on American forces.[412] In addition, staff officers within the Pentagon were worried that if the Soviets could capture the Stinger, they could reverse engineer it and copy it, or, at the very least, develop effective counter measures for it. Furthermore, if the Soviet Union linked Operation Cyclone to the Pakistani government there was a danger that the Soviet Union would invade Pakistan, further destabilizing the region. This outcome was of course in addition to the ever-present threat of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe.

There were also questions from U.S. policy-makers regarding the consequences of supplying the weapon system to Pakistan. Once in the hands of Pakistan, the weapons could then be sold to countries hostile to the United States and its interests. A likely scenario would be Pakistan selling the weapons to Iran, one of their key allies, which consequently was a major adversary of the

United States.[413] Even if the Soviets did not discover the CIA's involvement, and if Pakistan did funnel the weapons appropriately, how could the U.S. guarantee that the Mujahideen would use them against Soviet forces? Though the U.S. government had publicly described the Mujahideen as freedom fighters battling communist oppression, many Mujahideen were staunchly anti-American. Given the opportunity, many of the freedom fighters could use the Stinger missile against U.S. forces just as much as they would against the Soviet Union.[414]

Additionally, the constant tribal infighting could lead the Mujahideen to use the Stinger missiles to gain power once the Soviet Union withdrew, which could lead to the creation of another radical Islamic nation, similar to Iran.[415] The final consequence to actively supplying the Mujahideen meant that the Americans would have to work closely with Pakistan to get men and material over the border even though the Pakistani government supported, sometimes openly, anti-American groups and rhetoric.[416]

Nevertheless, the United States was forced to look beyond the anti-western sentiment as Pakistan was the only country in a position to directly support the Mujahideen. Consequently, the U.S. would have to turn a blind eye to the Pakistani nuclear weapons program in order to gain support for Operation Cyclone.[417] In doing so, Pakistan would be free to develop nuclear weapons, which would later raise tensions between Pakistan and India.

Once received, the Mujahideen immediately deployed the Stinger missiles into the field. As with any addition of a new weapon into a battlespace there was an evolution of tactics and counter tactics. Since many of the forward operating bases and airfields were secluded in the mountains, the Mujahideen remained concealed in the hills surrounding the base and they engaged the helicopters and fixed wing aircraft as they slowed to take off or land.[418] A particularly effective tactic was for the Mujahideen to wait in the open as bait and lure the helicopters into range while a second group armed with Stinger missiles would attack from a concealed position.[419] As a result, the Soviets had to alter their tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) in an attempt to adapt to the new threat. For example, fixed-wing aircraft would fly higher than the 15,000-foot range of the missiles.[420] In addition, Soviet helicopter pilots tried to limit their exposure by flying at high speeds close to the ground. This "nap

of the earth" tactic was copied from the American TTP changes during the Vietnam War.

The Soviets also tried to limit their flights to night-time missions. Each of these tactics approaches, though effective in avoiding aerial losses, limited Soviet effectiveness in destroying Mujahideen forces. Direct aerial fire missions became less accurate causing an increase in civilian casualties due to the releasing of ordnance at higher altitudes.[421] Often Soviet command would give the more dangerous missions to Afghani pilots. These pilots, seeking to avoid the serious threat of the Stinger missile often filed false reports or refused to fly altogether.[422]

The threat of the Stinger missile also forced the Soviet military to spend more money and resources on developing counter-measure technology. This effort included a rush to create improved flares, infrared beacons, baffles on their helicopter exhausts, and missile radar warning systems.[423]

Additionally, the Soviet Special Forces (Spetsnaz) were also tasked with hunting down and either capturing or destroying the Stinger missiles. This tactic is significant as the threat of the Stinger missiles forced the Soviets to allocate arguably their best personnel to hunting down these missiles, taking them away from their other counter insurgency missions and roles. Consequently, by focusing on the Mujahideen units armed with the American weapon, the Spetsnaz found themselves being lured into exposed positions.[424] Often, their helicopters were attacked by the very missile they were trying to eliminate. As a result, Spetsnaz units took heavy casualties.

A Success

Operation Cyclone was a clear success. Its achievements can be categorized into three areas: military, political and economic. Militarily, once the Stinger entered into the battlespace all previous Soviet tactics were forced to change and adapt. Soviet aircraft were no longer impervious to the Mujahideen. In 1986, the year the Stinger was introduced into Afghanistan, the Soviets suffered one aircraft loss a day for the first 100 days.[425] This rate of loss put considerable strain on the morale of Soviet troops, on the replenishment of resources, as well as causing a large increase in Soviet casualties. By the end

of the war in 1989, the Mujahideen had shot down hundreds of aircraft with a remarkable kill ratio of 75 percent per missile fired.[426] The war in Afghanistan had cost the Soviets approximately 15,000 dead and hundreds of thousands of wounded.[427] Although this rate of casualties was only a quarter of the casualties the Americans suffered during the Vietnam War, it still had dramatic political repercussions in the USSR.

By increasing Soviet casualties and depleting their resources to an unacceptable level, the Americans were able to push the war to a point where the Soviets could not keep up logistically. As a result of all the pressures from the conflict, the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in February 1989. The war had struck a considerable blow to the international reputation of the Soviet Union perceived globally as an unstoppable juggernaut. Once friendly Islamic nations now turned into fierce enemies, many of which had actively provided men and materials to the Mujahideen war effort. Conversely, the United States used the war to repair its relations with Middle East and Third World nations. These nations were often historically pro-Soviet, however, the conflict and in particular, the indiscriminate killing of Muslims, shifted these countries back towards the Americans.[428]

On the home front, the Soviet Union was in shambles. The war had damaged an already crippled economy. The average citizen did not understand why they were fighting in Afghanistan, nor could they accept the number of casualties.[429] Similar to the "Vietnam Syndrome" the U.S. suffered after 1975, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev commenced a general withdrawal from Third World after the loss in Afghanistan. He cut back financial and military assistance in countries such as Nicaragua, Cambodia, Cuba, Angola and Ethiopia.[430] This retreat was an effort to try and stabilize a collapsing, overextended economy.

The war in Afghanistan had cost the Soviets approximately $96 billion dollars.[431] This burden pushed an already strained economy to the breaking point. In comparison, Operation Cyclone only cost the U.S. $3 billion dollars.[432] Though a large amount of money for a single operation, the outcome was certainly worth the price. The total operation only required approximately 100 CIA operatives, incurred no American casualties and aided in the collapse of the Soviet Union.[433] Through the Stinger missile program, the U.S. was able to exploit Soviet fiscal difficulties by prolonging the war.

The Consequences

Though Operation Cyclone was a success, it was not without its consequences. As a natural result of providing training to the Mujahideen, the CIA had created a legitimate fighting force. Once the Soviet Union had withdrawn, many of these trained fighters returned to their home countries bringing their knowledge and new abilities with them. Countries such as Egypt, Algeria and the West Bank saw an influx of highly trained, battle-hardened Islamic extremists.[434] Groups that had been trained by the CIA are believed to have gone on to fight, or train others to fight, in conflicts in Azerbaijan, Bosnia, and Chechnya and ironically perform terrorist attacks in the United States.[435] The central issue with the CIA supplying Stinger missiles to the Mujahideen, however, was the lack of tracking or oversight of where the missiles went. By allowing the ISI to decide who received the weapons, the Americans lost any ability to retrieve unused missiles after the war. This lapse led to a U.S. buyback program in an effort to try and stop the Stingers from being sold on the black market.[436] It is reported that the CIA may have spent up to $65 million dollars in an effort to buy back the unused missiles.[437] As a result, there are possibly 200-300 missiles still in circulation.[438] Some of these missiles have been found, captured or destroyed in Bosnia, Tajikistan, Iran, Tunisia, India, Iraq, Zambia, North Korea, Libya, and Palestine. Colin Powell, as Secretary of State, cautioned that man-portable surface-to-air missiles such as the Stinger was the most significant threat to civilian and military aviation.[439] If these weapons made their way to Western Europe or North America they could have had devastating effects on civilian airliners and air transportation.

By the end of the war, so many arms and so much money had been funnelled into Afghanistan, it was hardly surprising that unrest would continue after a Soviet withdrawal. Militia groups were now well-established, well-armed and well-funded, they had trans-Islamic networks as well as training camps, and possibly most important of all, a sense of self-confidence that they could beat a world superpower.[440] Arguably, ultimately the war provided the genesis of such groups as Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, which would eventually gain strong footholds in Afghanistan. Though not the singular factor in the rise of these groups, arguably the CIA's involvement in Afghanistan played an influential role.

Conclusion

The CIA defines its mission as to "Preempt threats and further US national security objectives by collecting intelligence that matters, producing objective all-source analysis, conducting effective covert action as directed by the President, and safeguarding the secrets that help keep our Nation safe."[441] In this, Operation Cyclone was successful. President Reagan laid out his goals through NSDD 166 and each one of these goals were accomplished. Few other clandestine operations could tout such a success.

By supplying the Mujahideen with Stinger missiles, the CIA gave the rebels the ability to strike at the heart of Soviet power in Afghanistan. Needless to say, the withdrawal of Soviet forces was not solely due to this one program. There was a myriad of other factors that led to an end of the war and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union. What Operation Cyclone did achieve, however, was the ability for the U.S. to diminish the Soviets fighting effectiveness on the battlefield. Being able to neutralize Soviet military material and personnel without sustaining any American casualties is a remarkable achievement. The program also obtained its desired political goals with the withdrawal of Soviet forces out of Afghanistan limiting their power in the region. Through this example of strategic sabotage, the United States was able to deny the Soviets the chance of warm water ports, a Communist foothold in Afghanistan, as well as limiting the threat of Communist expansion into India and Pakistan.

Operation Cyclone became the largest CIA covert action operation in its history. Its effects were long-lasting, albeit somewhat controversial. By supplying the Stinger weapons system, the CIA had a significant positive impact on the Mujahideen's ability to counter Soviet power. This outcome derailed the Soviet's strategic and political objectives leading to an eventual Soviet withdrawal.

CHAPTER 9

SABOTAGING NATO STRATEGY? PAKISTAN IN AFGHANISTAN FROM 2001 TO PRESENT

Colonel Howard G. Coombs[442]

"Afghanistan's strategic location, wedged between Persia, the weathered steppes of Central Asia, and the trade routes of the Indian Subcontinent, has long made it alluring to great powers."[443]

Seth G. Jones

American political scientist Seth Jones follows this opening line to his seminal work, *In the Graveyard of Empires,* with a discussion of the various empires that have attempted to establish control over Afghanistan. Jones outlines the pursuit of grand strategic goals in the region over time and details the resulting disappointments. These failures were not only attributable to the indomitable fighting spirit and qualities of Afghan warriors, but more importantly, the overarching difficulties in controlling the region. These latter obstacles ranged from challenges of geography, through a myriad of complexities, to the dynamics of tribal relationships and alliances. Today the impediments to any intervention in Afghanistan include the strategic interests of neighboring countries. One of these bordering states, Pakistan, directly and indirectly supported insurgents in countering International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) activities.[444] Pakistan's interests were motivated by a desire to ensure that any Afghan government was unaligned with its regional nemesis, India.[445] Likewise, Pakistan's support to militant Islamic groups, particularly the Taliban, in destabilizing the Afghan government advanced this Pakistani national interest. All the while, Pakistan publicly claimed it

was endorsing NATO interests, despite these other actions in succouring the insurgents impeding NATO strategy in Afghanistan from 2001 onwards.

Afghanistan has been a strategic crossroads for centuries and, over that period, various national or international goals have come into conflict. The NATO military intervention in Afghanistan with ISAF started another chapter in this continuing conflux of strategic interests. Commencing in 2001 with the initial goal of providing support to the Afghanistan Transitional Authority (ATA),[446] or interim government, by affording a secure environment in and around Kabul; however, the mission expanded over time. Initially ISAF worked in conjunction with the United States-coordinated Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). In 2003-2004, with the fighting in Iraq, as OEF contracted to re-allocate its resources, ISAF expanded. By the end of 2006, ISAF covered the entire country. NATO's strategy was aimed at re-integrating Afghanistan as a functioning nation within the international community and in doing so, addressing concerns regarding Afghanistan's role in supporting international terrorism. ISAF's operational objectives to support this strategy were to: (1) fight insurgency; (2) reinforce Afghanistan's nascent government and its security forces; and, (3) curb the trade in opium.[447]

Despite these aspirations, the insurgency continued to grow and by 2009. Consequently, following the United States-led "surge" of approximately 40,000 personnel, there were about 100,000 military personnel involved in the ISAF mission. In coordination with Afghan national forces, ISAF engaged in counterinsurgency operations and, until 2011, transitioned most responsibility for security operations from NATO to Afghan forces. At that point, NATO became exclusively focused upon security force capacity building through the NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan. This training commitment ended in 2014. Since then, NATO has conducted Operation Resolute Support, which has the Alliance engaging in a much-diminished direct role than previously. Operation Resolute Support will eventually set the conditions for a NATO exit from Afghanistan, which may be sooner rather than later based on current American political discussion of withdrawal from Afghanistan.[448]

From 2001, NATO implementation of its strategic aspirations in Afghanistan conflicted with Pakistan's goals in the region. Pakistan's ongoing tensions with India informs its strategic perspective vis-à-vis Afghanistan. To put this in

context, between 1947 and 1999 there were four wars between Pakistan and India. Another almost occurred in 2002. Most of this conflict was over ownership of the Kashmir region and tensions between the two countries concerning this area continue today. As a result, Pakistan prefers an unstable Afghanistan on its western border, rather than a functioning nation state aligned with India. Moreover, if a stable Afghanistan were to support possible Indian-initiated future hostilities, Pakistan would be confronted by a two-front war.[449]

Further complicating Pakistan's strategic perspective are the demographics of its western territories. Pashtuns, who make up the largest ethnicity in Afghanistan, are the second largest ethnicity in Pakistan. They comprise approximately 15 percent of the Pakistani population and formed the majority along Pakistan's northwest frontier with Afghanistan.[450] Additionally, following the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan had supported the Afghan mujahideen in their fight to regain their homeland. Assistance to the mujahideen had been fronted by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate who, with Central Intelligence Agency support, gave aid to Afghan resistance leaders. Following the 1989 Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan continued its support to Islamic fundamentalist groups to offset the growing influence of India, Iran, Russia, and China in the border region. These Muslim groups included, with their appearance in the 1990s, the Taliban.

One could argue that the Taliban are not strictly Afghan in nature, but rather a fusion of Afghans and Pakistanis. Many of this generation of the Taliban were raised in refugee camps in Pakistan without Afghan tribal or family roots. Their fundamentalist education and world view were created in the religious schools, or *madrasas*, of Pakistan. Indeed, the root of Taliban is *taleb*, or religious student. Though knowing little of Afghanistan, their disillusionment with the post-Soviet mujahideen resistance and the infighting that occurred between these groups set the conditions for the Islamic idealism of the Taliban movement. The Pakistani government viewed the establishment of Taliban government in Afghanistan in 1995-1996 as advantageous to their interests.[451]

Subsequently, after the 2001 displacement of the Taliban from Afghanistan and their retrenchment in Pakistan, Pakistan did not view their support of the Afghan insurgency as incompatible with their international alliances. With American support, Pakistan had been instrumental in evacuating

Taliban fighters and officials to safety.[452] From a geo-strategic perspective, they perceived their links with the United States as a counterbalance to India's relationship with China. Indeed, from a Pakistani standpoint the *quid pro quo* within this strategic calculus was providing the United States, and by extension NATO, use of its territory for logistics basing and transit to landlocked Afghanistan. Indeed, American defence journalist Sean Naylor highlights in his book *Relentless Strike: The Secret History of Joint Special Operations Command,* that in the initial stages of OEF and prior to the fall of the Taliban government, Pakistan had allowed transit for American special operations forces. During later efforts to counter *Al-Qaeda*, a militant Islamic group founded by Osama Bin Laden, United States Central Command established Pakistan-based special operations coordination cells. These units worked with Pakistani authorities to neutralize *Al-Qaeda* threats located in the border regions.[453]

NATO was aware of the potential negative impact of Pakistani support to the Taliban on its strategy in Afghanistan and attempted to manage these disintegrating influences in a diplomatic manner. In his autobiography, General Rick Hillier details his visit to Pakistan and the border region prior to taking command of ISAF in 2004:

> The visit gave me a real appreciation of the Pakistani side of the problem: one look at that geography and you could tell how easy it would be for a terrorist group to live up there forever and move with impunity. Everyone knew that the Taliban were using the area as a safe haven, and it was already becoming clear that the early wins against the Taliban in 2002 and '03 were distant memories. The Taliban were still present and still a threat. That threat was reflected in the suicide-bomber attacks in Kabul in 2004 and continued low-level attacks across Afghanistan's southern provinces.[454]

Hillier's book does not again mention Pakistan during his time as Commander ISAF, but in retrospect, his work to achieve NATO objectives was greatly affected by Pakistani support to insurgents.

For instance, when Hillier took command, ISAF was in the initial phases of NATO expansion. Taking a lesson from his experiences during peace operations in the Balkans, he had his staff work with the with the administration

of Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai. This work was later incorporated into the Afghan National Development Strategy. These efforts were designed to create a focused government-led stabilization and reconstruction plan that was aimed at neutralizing threats to the emerging Afghan state. This work also assisted the Karzai administration in re-affirming its position as the legitimate source of Afghan governance through programs focused on enhancing all aspects of human security. Unsurprisingly the roots of some of the greatest areas of instability were receiving outside support from sources located in Pakistan. This succour included support to Afghanistan's illicit economy which revolved around the opium trade. Ultimately, this outside assistance intensified the impact of military and militant forces that were oppositional to the ATA, and later to the Afghan government.[455]

The negative impact of these factors grew over time and fuelled the increasing level of violence associated with the Taliban and other groups from 2002 onwards. Opium funded the Taliban and the movement of narcotics to Pakistan and onward through intermediaries, which allowed a constant flow of cash for the fighting. Along with that, Pakistani support for Taliban recruitment, training, and logistics within the northwest border region further sustained the war that raged in Afghanistan. All NATO efforts to interdict these activities were only partially successful. For example, in 2007, NATO and the Pakistani military created a Joint Intelligence Operations Centre (JIOC) in Kabul. This joint project was implemented to increase the intelligence coordination amongst NATO, ISAF, and Pakistan. This initiative was not the only endeavour to build stronger NATO/Pakistan relations. Additionally, the other key area of NATO/Pakistan cooperation was permitting the air and ground transit of supplies from and through Pakistan during the ISAF mission. Those assured air and ground lines of communication continue even now during Operation Resolute Support.[456]

Despite these cooperative efforts, another Commander ISAF, General Stanley McChrystal, observed that from 2009 to 2010, when he led NATO forces in Afghanistan, Pakistani support to the Taliban continued to exacerbate the insurgency. In his memoir he echoes Hillier's thoughts: "The Taliban had, since their expulsion in 2001, used Pakistan's ungoverned border areas as sanctuary from which to recruit, lead, and organize the fight in Afghanistan often with Pakistani support."[457] McChrystal also affirmed that the Taliban were a mixture of militant Islamic groups with foci on both sides of the Afghanistan/Pakistan

border. Their aim was to force ISAF from Afghanistan and fight Pakistani military intervention in the northwest frontier region. In McChrystal's reminiscence he believed that this growing internal threat would change the strategic calculus. Pakistan would not longer see a Taliban dominated Afghanistan as a desirable neighbour due to the potential that it could become a haven for fundamentalist groups opposing the Pakistani government. However, while McChrystal hoped to get more cooperation from the Pakistani military in combatting the Taliban, he acknowledged that ISAF would likely have to succeed in their fight without the wholehearted support of Pakistani authorities.[458] Journalist Ahmed Rashid, who has explored many facets of the Afghanistan conflict, describes in his book *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, that over the decades of supporting the mujahideen and later the Taliban, the ISI was inextricably intertwined with supporting this militant Islamic group. Rasheed attributes this backing to a core of Pashtun Islamic field officers who had advocated since the mid-1990s continuing support to the Taliban.[459]

Resultantly, despite the aspirations of NATO and ISAF commanders, elements of the Pakistani defence and security establishment continued to support insurgent activities throughout the duration of the ISAF mission.[460] A leaked 2012 NATO report that contained the results of interviews from many insurgent detainees stated that Pakistani support was exacerbating the insurgency:

> A point of continued frustration for Taliban leaders is their inability to independently negotiate an early end to the conflict. Pakistan continues to monitor, manipulate and direct Taliban interaction with outside entities. Safe havens provided by Pakistan are juxtaposed with their willingness to immediately arrest any Taliban personnel deemed uncooperative. Many Taliban members believe that neither Pakistan nor GIRoA [Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan] are willing to allow a peaceful end of the war, and therefore forsake the considerable material gains to be garnered from the conflict. Even senior Taliban leaders are fearful that they will be pressed from each side to continue the fight indefinitely.[461]

This NATO finding not only spoke to the Taliban belief that it was within Pakistan's strategic interests to prolong the conflict but also gives a surprising

perspective of the Afghan government. Whether this latter idea was accurate or not remains to be proved.

In 2012, the NATO combat mission transitioned wholly to building security force capability through training and assistance. That training mission ended in 2014 and became an advisory effort that is ongoing at the time of this writing. Pakistan has overtly continued to help NATO and the United States in maintaining the coherency of the Afghan state. At the same time, however, Pakistan is interested in a weak and broken Afghanistan that is no threat to their interests. Eventually an older model of the Afghan nation may emerge that reflects the reality of conflicting tribal politics, ungoverned violence, and a weak central government in Kabul. Some individuals, like retired U.S. Army Lieutenant General Daniel Bolger, argue that this is the "best case."[462] Others, like American strategic researcher John Nagl, present a more troubling vision of unending regional conflict stating that "Pakistan is the core of the problem in the region...for many years to come."[463]

Reflecting upon Pakistan's actions vis-à-vis NATO strategy in Afghanistan leads one to opine that the support provided to the Taliban did negatively affect NATO strategy. It would be hard to acknowledge otherwise. Furthermore, the discussion of whether Pakistan deliberately planned to sabotage NATO, or not, is irrelevant given that the negative impact of actions by elements of the Pakistani defence and security establishment had the same effect. If one re-examines ISAF's operational objectives that would lead to a secure Afghan environment, it becomes evident that the safe havens and logistics that were accessible to the Taliban and other militant Islamic groups in the Pakistani northwest border region continuously allowed these militant groups to interdict ISAF's goals. As a result, ISAF never created the security that would have enabled the establishment of stable Afghan governance/government and, in turn, disallowed NATO to achieve its strategic ends. That regional insecurity continues today and further empowers Pakistan's strategic calculus of avoiding a two-front war with India by promoting a weak and unstable Afghanistan.

CHAPTER 10

IRANIAN USE OF PROXIES IN STRATEGIC SABOTAGE

Dr. Peter McCabe and
Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas Kramer

On 14 December 2017, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, presented what she declared to be concrete evidence of an Iranian short-range ballistic missile – fragments from an attack on a civilian international airport in Saudi Arabia – provided to Houthi rebels in Yemen by Iran.[464] This event highlights Iran's use of proxies to further its foreign policy agenda and frustrate its adversaries' objectives in the Middle East, specifically in this case its regional rival Saudi Arabia. Iran's intervention in the civil war in Yemen also had the added benefit of raising the cost of American support to Saudi Arabia in the war and impeding U.S. objectives in Yemen. But the Houthis are just one of the many groups supported by Iran in the Middle East.

This chapter will focus on Iran's use of its many proxies to conduct strategic sabotage against the U.S. and the West. Iran has been advancing its security interests and frustrating its adversaries in the region through proxies for decades, and currently benefits from linkages to a vast array of proxy groups throughout the greater Middle East. These regional proxies include groups in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan which oppose the regional order led by the U.S.[465] Figure 10.1, from the International Institute for Strategic Studies, is an excellent visual depiction of the current status of Iran's regional designs for these proxies. Through this proxy network, Iran seeks to create an Islamic resistance to pressure Western power and influence out of the region, ensuring the Iranian regime's survival and expanding its regional power.[466] Iran's proxies are a major pillar of its grand strategy.[467] Iran's provision of lethal technology to those proxies is a significant aspect to its endeavour and allows Iran to credibly hold its regional rivals, and

American bases and forces, at risk. While the terms "precision strike complex" or "anti-access/area denial" (A2/AD) are more closely associated with China and Russia in defence circles, both terms increasingly apply to Iran and its proxies. And, despite U.S. and regional powers' policies to curb Iranian activities, Iran's use of its proxies in strategic sabotage continues to expand its influence.

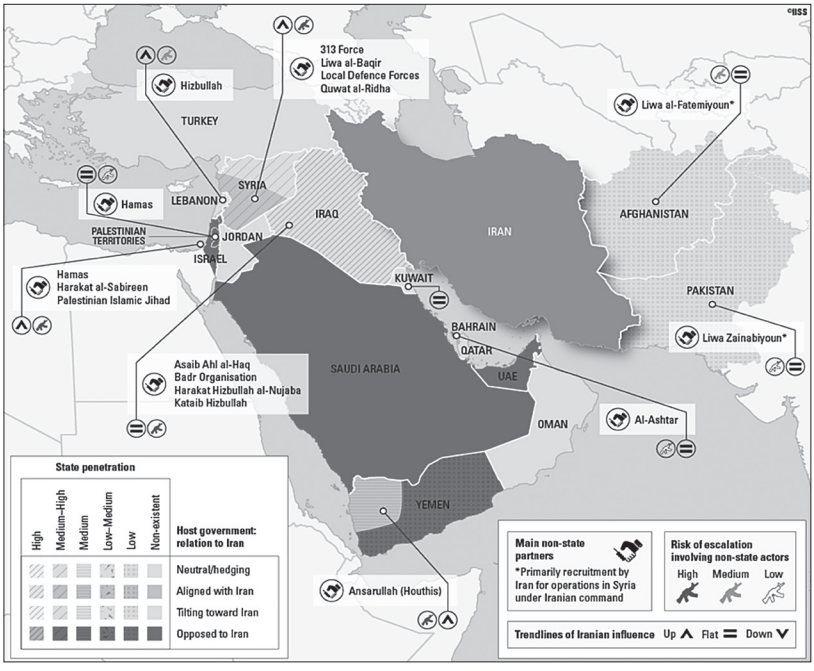


Figure 10.1: Iran's Networks of Influence in the Middle East

SOURCE: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Iran's Networks of Influence in the Middle East*, November 2019, iiss.org/publications/strategic-dossiers/iran-dossier/iran-19-03-ch-1-tehrans-strategic

This chapter proceeds in six sections. It begins by defining what makes a proxy and addresses some common misconceptions about the principal-agent relationship. The next four sections are short cases studies (Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and Countering Max Pressure Campaign) of these proxy groups and how Iran uses its proxies in strategic sabotage to achieve its objectives in the Middle East. Each case study was chosen for the significance of the proxy and/or development in Iran's use of strategic sabotage. The chapter concludes by recommending ways the U.S. and its partners and allies, and specifically Special Operations Forces (SOF), can counterbalance Iran's use of proxies in strategic

sabotage in the region. Counterbalancing Iranian proxies by SOF will require Special Operations to focus less on direct action and more on working by, with, and through SOF partners and allies.

What is a Proxy?

The simple definition of the term "proxy" is the agency, function, or office of a deputy who acts as a substitute for another.[468] For this chapter, a more security-specific definition of the terms proxy or proxy forces is the litany of Iranian-financed, trained, organized, or ideologically aligned armed groups in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq.[469] While a proxy force is aligned with a state, such as Iran, it does not mean the proxy force is completely controlled by the state. Rather, this "principal" (Iran) and "agent" (proxy force) relationship is complicated. Principal-agent theory is popular in economics, law, and security. In political science, proxy conflicts depend on how much support is provided by the principal (a state) to the agent (a group).

For example, the U.S. provides Afghanistan with large amounts of funding, weapons, and troops to help with the fight against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, but this is not considered a principal-agent relationship since U.S. troops are actually "on the ground," indicating a more traditional alliance. However, Iran's provision of weapons and funding to Houthi rebels in Yemen, as well as the American military and intelligence support to Saudi Arabia, do constitute principal-agent relationships, because Iran and the U.S. in these scenarios do not provide on-the-ground troops in the conflict (although they do provide advisors). The principal-agent relationship is not simply the principal providing incentives (i.e., funding and weapons) to the agent and directing the agent to do its bidding: rather, there is a loose agreement and affiliation between the two that needs to be examined, which this chapter will attempt for each selected case study.

The principal-agent relationship is not a new concept. The U.S. and Soviet Union conducted many proxy wars across the globe during the Cold War. They conducted warfare in this way to avoid a direct confrontation with each other. Iran prefers proxy wars for the same reason and has a long history of using non-state actors to deter regional threats. For example, Iran supported a Kurdish insurgency against the Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr government in Iraq to deter Iraq from acting on long-standing claims over disputed parts of the

border river between the two countries.[470] Presently, Iran wants to avoid a direct confrontation with the U.S. at all costs yet seeks to challenge American hegemony – its method of choice is its proxies.

The next four sections review Iran's use of proxies in four geographically significant countries during noteworthy timeframes for the evolution of Iran's use of strategic sabotage. These case studies were chosen to illustrate Iran's use of strategic sabotage through proxies but does not represent the only cases. The authors have chosen not to discuss case studies in Syria, Afghanistan, and other areas of the Middle East due to selecting only those cases that best illustrate the point and for expediency. While other cases exist, the following four cases provide evidence of Iran's use of proxies for strategic sabotage.

Southern Lebanon 1982-2000

The Islamic Republic of Iran's intervention in southern Lebanon starting in the 1980s is its first use of a proxy to frustrate an adversary's strategic objectives and advance its own interests. Hezbollah, as an Iranian proxy, represents the ideal characteristics to act within Iran's strategy in the Middle East – embedded in domestic politics, economy, and society, militarily skilled and technologically capable, and ideologically aligned with the Supreme Leader of Iran. But, this was not always the case. Beginning in the early 1980s, Hezbollah has evolved from a weak force to a formidable force multiplier that bested a modern conventional military (i.e. Israel) in 2006 and has been employed directly against jihadists in Syria while also deploying elements to Yemen and Iraq. Little did Israeli leaders know that the 1982 invasion of southern Lebanon would result in the formation of what some twenty years later, in 2003, would be referred to as the "A-Team of terrorist groups" by the then Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage.[471]

Furthermore, Hezbollah stands as a cautionary tale for what the future may hold for other Iranian proxies. The interaction of Iran with Hezbollah over this period witnessed the diffusion of increasingly capable military technology from Iran to Hezbollah. It is a characteristic that has become a hallmark of Iran's strategic sabotage – providing military technology to proxies in geographically significant locations to credibly hold adversaries' critical infrastructure at risk. However, not all of Hezbollah's evolution can be credited to Iran and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). It owes a good deal of its

success to the cycle of learning and adapting it has done in conflict with the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) over the decades. This interaction with a militarily superior adversary has left the group progressively more skilled.

During the 1980s as the IDF was still consolidating its occupation of southern Lebanon, Hezbollah was an emerging organization trying to get its footing against a militarily superior foe. It largely pursued terrorism tactics (kidnappings and suicide bombings) and other strategically insufficient operations (small ambushes and frontal assaults of fortified positions) to attain its ends and were unlikely either to push the IDF out of southern Lebanon or drive Western influence from the country.[472]

However, Hezbollah's use of suicide bombing did produce some notable tactical effects against the IDF, the U.S., and Europeans, namely the French. The most notorious of Hezbollah's bombings was conducted in 1983 against the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, resulting in 241 Marines killed.[473] Ten minutes after the attack at the Marine barracks another similar suicide bombing occurred at the French parachutist barracks, killing 58.[474] Other bombings occurred against an IDF headquarters in southern Lebanon in the city of Tyre. The headquarters was struck first in 1982, killing 75 IDF soldiers, and again in 1983, killing 28, as well as dozens of Lebanese detainees.[475] Even though Hezbollah was pursuing a strategy ill-suited to its objectives, it did gain a reputation for the success of its bombings – so much so, in fact, that according to official government intelligence sources, Osama Bin Laden sent al-Qaeda members to learn from Hezbollah before that group's embassy bombings in Africa in the late 1990s.[476]

Beginning in the late 1980s, a shift in Hezbollah's tactics brought its operations more in line with its objectives. In a prelude to what American forces would experience in Iraq in 2006-2008, Hezbollah began demonstrating hallmarks of a guerilla army, conducting ambushes and hit-and-run attacks against the IDF in an attempt to exhaust the Israeli public and force a political decision on the war.[477] It combined a strategy of attrition with psychological warfare – both through the deft use of the media and the fear brought to Israel through rockets falling on northern cities – to whittle away at Israeli public support for the occupation.[478] This methodology is partially an outcome of receiving professional military training from the IRGC in explosives, field intelligence,

and reconnaissance, but also of combat adaptation due to failed operations.[479] Probably the most profound evidence of Hezbollah's development during this period is that the IDF changed how it viewed and fought Hezbollah.[480]

While Hezbollah was receiving aid from the IRGC, it is important not to ascribe too much agency for Hezbollah's turn toward guerilla war to Iran and the IRGC – Hezbollah had and has agency. Iran was struggling against Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War and was not demonstrating masterfulness in its military effectiveness against Saddam's military. Furthermore, Hezbollah had many effective leaders capable of learning, adapting, and structuring and training its forces, including Abbas Musssawi, Imad Muganiya, and Nasrallah, among others.[481] However, Iranian financial and rhetorical support in addition to professional military training were both significant, allowing Hezbollah to pay fighters, buy weapons, and train, as well as provide Hezbollah with diplomatic support from Lebanese politicians and Syrian neighbours.

The 1990s also witnessed the introduction of rockets – namely the Katyusha – into Hezbollah's arsenal against Israel, which would grow exponentially over the coming decades. Starting in 1992, Hezbollah waged "rocket warfare" against northern Israeli cities around the Sea of Galilee in an effort to compel Israeli forces to leave southern Lebanon and for the psychological effect on the Israeli public, proving to be quite effective in sowing terror.[482] With the utility of Hezbollah's rockets proven, by 2001, it had truck-mounted launching systems and by 2006, the group acquired an estimated 12,000 rockets.[483] Currently, according to intelligence agencies, Hezbollah's arsenal numbers in the hundreds of thousands, and now includes more accurate missiles with wider ranges, such as the SCUD-D and Russian-made anti-ship cruise missiles.[484]

It is worth mentioning that during this same period Hezbollah made the decision to take part in Lebanese politics. The decision came as a result of the group's future being called into question domestically because of the Ta'if agreement (ending the civil war in 1989), and by its foreign backer after Ruhollah Khomeini's death in 1989. Three years later, in 1992, Hezbollah decided to participate in parliamentary elections, winning eight out of 128 seats – making Hezbollah's the largest single block within the new parliament.[485] Domestically, Hezbollah tried to present itself as a peaceful non-governmental organization committed to social welfare projects and the Lebanese political

system.[486] Hezbollah has engaged in a social network that includes housing, education, healthcare, and other services.[487] Since its first parliamentary election, Hezbollah has managed other political milestones such as gaining representation in the cabinet.[488] Like most political parties, Hezbollah's influence has waxed and waned, but its elected presence has been consistent, and the group remains a significant voice in Lebanese politics today.[489]

By the year 2000, and after almost two decades of fighting, Israeli society became increasingly intolerant of IDF casualties in southern Lebanon, and Israeli leaders decided to withdraw Israeli forces from the security zone. At the time of the IDF's withdrawal, Hezbollah had become the IRGC's model proxy – ideologically aligned, highly capable, embedded in Lebanese politics, and responsive to the Islamic Republic of Iran's interests – and a key player in undermining Western objectives in Lebanon and the broader region. Additionally, Hezbollah had become increasingly skillful and technologically capable, due to the cycle of learning and adaptation that occurred in conflict with the IDF. Hezbollah has continued to demonstrate its fighting prowess during the 2006 Lebanon War and in Syria during the Syrian Civil War.

Iraq 2006-2008

During the 2006-2008 timeframe, Iran's strategic sabotage strategy in Iraq mirrored the strategy developed and implemented in southern Lebanon against the IDF. The Iraq case study exhibits all the same hallmarks – the transfer of lethal technology, militarily skilled and technologically capable proxies, proxies embedded in the body politic, and some proxies that are strict adherents to *wilayat al-fiqeh* (primacy of Islamic clerics). However, this case study differs from the Lebanon case study in that Iran was much better prepared to seize the opportunity presented by the U.S. invasion and subsequent toppling of Saddam Hussein. During the Iraq-Iran War, Iran had financed, organized, trained, and equipped Iraqi exile groups – namely the Badr Corps – all of which were poised to enter post-invasion Iraq and act in Iran's interests.

Early in the American occupation, two Iranian-linked groups – the Badr Corps and Jaish al-Mahdi (JAM) – stood out among the country's violent groups and played significant roles pushing back against the coalition forces' efforts. However, as elections and governing became a real possibility for these groups

in 2005, they sought to shed the appearance of ties to Iran and took on a more nationalist flavor.[490] There is evidence that during this timeframe Iran sought to divide its proxies in Iraq between groups working openly in the Iraqi system and those that worked covertly.[491] Thus, the most ardent adherents to *wilayat al-fiqeh* broke away from Badr Corps and JAM and formed their own groups, such as Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) and Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH). These two more ardent devotees of the Supreme Leader were committed to the direction of the IRGC Quds Force. KH and AAH in particular ensured that Iran would have a means to influence Iraqi politics, even if Iraqi politics turned more nationalistic.

Like in Lebanon, Iran's Iraqi proxies eventually embedded themselves in the body politic to provide Iran with political influence over domestic political decisions. The Badr Corps and the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) epitomized this model in 2005. SCIRI eventually changed its name in an effort to distance itself from Iran and rebranded as the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council (SIIC). SIIC did well in the three elections in Iraq held in 2005 and managed to secure control of the Ministry of the Interior.[492]

Both Sadr's JAM and SIIC took control of critical Iraqi ministries important to consolidating Iranian influence in Iraq after the elections. JAM's control of the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Transportation allowed it to provide social services to allies while denying access and supplies to adversaries.[493] It also allowed JAM members to easily infiltrate MoH institutions, specifically the MoH facilities security forces, for nefarious activities.[494] This allowed for particularly heinous developments during the sectarian civil war in Iraq from 2006-2008 as suspected Sunni insurgents and leaders disappeared from hospitals while under treatment, and entire Sunni communities were denied access to healthcare and medical supplies.[495] Contemporarily, SIIC's control of the Ministry of the Interior allowed the Badr Corps to heavily infiltrate the state police.[496] Again, this took an especially grim turn as sectarian violence became rampant, and reports grew of the predominately Shia (and assumed Badr-infiltrated) Iraqi police dragging off suspected Sunni insurgents, never to be heard from again.[497]

While Badr and JAM were taking on political roles, KH and AAH emerged between 2006 and 2008 as pillars of covert Iranian influence in Iraq. KH was formed by the IRGC Quds Force's most experienced operators in 2007 and was

given the most sensitive equipment.[498] Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis became the leader of KH leaving behind his leadership role in the Badr Corps and acted as an advisor to Major General Qassem Sulomanei of the IRGC Quds Force.[499] Both men were killed in January 2020 when a hellfire from a U.S. drone struck the car in which they were traveling while leaving Baghdad International Airport, reportedly for a meeting to coordinate attacks against American forces in Iraq.[500] AAH on the other hand grew out of Muqtada al-Sadr's JAM organization as a more controllable partner than Sadr and JAM. AAH carried out several kidnappings during this period, one in Basra reminiscent of Hezbollah in the 1980s and made use of sophisticated tactics, training, and procedures. These two groups continue to be pillars of Iran's influence in Iraq even today.[501]

Additionally, during this timeframe, Iran, through the IRGC Quds Force, supplied its proxies with lethal technology in the form of explosively formed penetrating (EFP) devices. The Sunni insurgency had already demonstrated the effectiveness of improvised explosive devices (IED) and car bombs against coalition forces as a form of strategic sabotage. Augmenting near-daily IED attacks were EFPs. The most intense period of EFP attacks occurred from the end of 2005 to the spring of 2008. According to the *New York Times,* EFP attacks increased from 62 in December 2006 to 99 in July 2007.[502] And, while the U.S. military eventually reported that from 2005 to 2011 only 196 American service member deaths and 861 wounded service member casualties could be attributed to Iranian EFPs, the vast majority of deaths and wounded from EFPs occurred from 2006 to 2008.[503] In July 2007, 23 of the 69 deaths and 89 of the 614 wounded were attributed to EFPs.[504] This period coincided with U.S. policymakers' review of American objectives in Iraq and calls for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq. Iran likely calculated increasing American deaths in Iraq during this period would encourage opposition to the war that might accelerate the timeline for withdrawal of U.S. forces.

As has already been suggested, a budding sectarian civil war was occurring simultaneously and in the background to the American occupation and fight against Al-Qaeda in Iraq and the broader Sunni opposition. In February 2006, AQI destroyed the Al-Askari mosque in Samara, exacerbating sectarian tensions and instigating widespread sectarian violence in mixed regions and cities of Iraq, like Baghdad, over the next two years.[505] Iranian-linked organizations were well-positioned in many ways, including within the state's security

apparatus, to crush the Sunni opposition and solidify Iran's strategic project in Iraq. Ultimately, the Shia militias' campaign against the Sunni insurgency, which reached a peak in 2007, forced a strategic decision by several Sunni opposition groups to ally with American forces against AQI.[506] Despite this alliance, the Shia-dominated government ensured the Sunni opposition would not have a strong voice in governing Iraq.

Iran's use of strategic sabotage in Iraq mirrored its experience in southern Lebanon against Israel and the IDF, except in this case against the United States. Nonetheless, Iran arguably achieved a much more important objective in Iraq: what had once been its greatest enemy, Iran's proxies had transformed into a fractured and weak neighbor with close linkages to Iran. The strategy used to further its regional project in Iraq had very familiar characteristics – the provision of lethal technology, increasingly skilled and effective proxies, proxies embedded in the political system, and some groups being devout ideological adherents. Iraq stands out in one notable way from Iran's support to other proxies in the Levant in that its experience took on an unmistakably sectarian agenda. While Iran can claim support to Sunni groups in Gaza, its agenda made a clear turn toward support to Shia groups in Iraq.

Yemen 2015-2020

Iran's use of strategic sabotage in Yemen differs from the first two cases studies but is no less significant. First, Iran had significantly less history and influence with the Houthis. Second, unlike the first two case studies, the Houthis, being Zaydi Shi'a, are the least ideologically aligned with Iran. However, Iran added a geographically significant partner to its array of proxies where it had little presence before. Yemen's location provides Iran the ability to credibly target commerce through the Bab al Mandeb and critical Saudi and Emirati infrastructure while maintaining plausible deniability. Iranian-provided missiles and drones have targeted critical infrastructure in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – both of which have forces fighting the Houthis in Yemen. And the Houthis have played a major role for Iran by taking the fall for Iranian direct attacks.

As Dr. Roby Barrett describes in his Joint Special Operations University Press 2011 monograph, *Yemen: A Different Political Paradigm in Context*, in Yemen, "power is based on family, clan, and tribal relationships and not a national

identity" and "central authority has been maintained only in balance with tribal, sectarian, and political groups that align with central leaders based on a system of patronage."[507] Barrett's point is simple: there is not one Yemen, but multiple Yemens with fundamental social, cultural, and sectarian differences. This chapter will not review the long history of Yemen sectarian battles for control of territory (see Barrett's work), but the reader should know that it consists of externally backed militant groups, multiple civil wars and armed resistance, tribal powers with access to weapons, and historical enmity between the north and south.

One such group in northern Yemen are the Houthi rebels (known as Ansar Allah) who are Zaydi Shi'a. Shi'a Muslims are the minority community in the Islamic world and Zaydis are a minority of Shi'a. Zaydis are significantly different in doctrine and beliefs from Iranian Shi'a. The Houthis emerged as a Zaydi resistance to Yemen leader, Ali Abdullah Saleh, and his corruption in the 1990s, and are led by a charismatic leader named Hussein al Houthi, for whom the group is named.[508] The latest crisis in Yemen is a result of Saudi Arabia going to war to support the current Yemen (Sunni) leader, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. Unfortunately for Hadi, the Houthis and security forces loyal to Saleh forced Hadi to flee the country in 2015. Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Arab states began an air campaign aimed to defeat the Houthis, ending Iran's influence, and restoring Hadi to power. The Arab coalition has received logistical and intelligence support from the U.S. and other Western states.

Iran's support to the Houthis is intended to bleed Iran's principal regional rival, Saudi Arabia, and drain it of resources to reduce its ability to mount a direct war with Iran.[509] To this end, Iran has sent advanced conventional weapons, including missiles, as well as military advisors to support Houthis rebels against the recognized government of Yemen, which is militarily and financially supported by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and, indirectly, the United States.[510] For example, in September 2019, Saudi Arabia's eastern oil fields of Abqaiq and Khurais were attacked by drones and cruise missiles, disrupting nearly half the kingdom's oil production – representing around five percent of global oil output.[511] The Houthis have continually fired missiles and drones against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The attacks escalated in June 2020 when the Houthis launched missiles against the Saudi capital of Riyadh. In November 2020, Houthi forces fired Iranian supplied

missiles against a Saudi Aramco oil company distribution station in Saudi Arabia's Red Sea city of Jeddah.[512]

These continual attacks by missiles and drones are usually intercepted and destroyed by the Saudi-led coalition forces; however, strikes have proven to be an effective tool to thwart the Saudi-led coalition's ability to achieve its desired political outcomes. Iran's support to the Houthis in its strategic sabotage against its regional rival has extended the conflict for the last five years and achieves Iran's goal of countering both American and Saudi influence in the region. While this proxy war between the U.S. and Iran is beneficial to Iran's regional strategy, Yemen's continuing instability harms the U.S. counter-terrorism objective of combating Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's operations.

The American response to Iranian weapons reaching Houthi forces has consisted of a conventional (economical and military) response – specifically, U.S. sanctions on Iranian weapon manufacturers and U.S. maritime operations off the coast of Yemen in the Arabian Sea. The latter has been a hit-and-miss operation with only seven interceptions of vessels with suspected Iranian weapons in the last five years, the latest being a cache which included weapons and advanced missile components that have been linked to Iran.[513] The U.S., its partners and allies, and Special Operations specifically, need to rethink its policy toward Yemen. Conducting a proxy war with Iran for the last five years has only exacerbated Yemen instability and allowed Iran to thwart American and Saudi political goals.

Countering Max Pressure 2018 to Present

Since May 2018, Tehran has been waging a campaign to counter the U.S. policy of "maximum pressure," with the aim of forcing Washington to ease or lift economic sanctions reimposed after the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Iran's campaign has included attacks on oil infrastructure in Saudi Arabia and tankers in the Persian Gulf; the diversion of oil tankers; an attack on an American reconnaissance drone in the Persian Gulf; rocket attacks on U.S. military personnel in Iraq; harassment of U.S. naval vessels in the Persian Gulf; cyber reconnaissance activities; attempts to interfere in the 2020 presidential election; and efforts to sabotage American infrastructure.[514]

This counter pressure campaign represents an inflection point in Iran's use of proxies in strategic sabotage. It also illustrates a possible glimpse into the future of Iranian proxy use. For the first time, Iran took significant direct military action but disguised its role as that of a proxy. In other circumstances, such an attack on another country's critical infrastructure would be cause for war. However, the ambiguity surrounding the attack and who took credit for it complicated any response. Additionally, pressure was applied in and from multiple countries and using multiple levers of national power – diplomatic, economic, and military – in an attempt to compel U.S. policymakers to change course. This region-wide pressure will become commonplace as Iran consolidates its regional position. While the events of the counter pressure campaign have yet to play out fully, there have been significant developments in the last two years that warrant study.

In May 2018, the Trump administration announced its maximum pressure campaign against Iran, withdrawing from the JCPOA and reimposing unilateral economic sanctions on different sectors of the Iranian economy, primarily the oil sector.[515] For the next year, the administration worked to increase pressure on Iran's oil sector by incrementally allowing sanction waivers to expire for major Iranian oil importing countries. The last waivers expired in May 2019. According to BBC reporting, since May of 2018, Iran has experienced negative growth and its oil exports had dropped from 2.5 million barrels a day to less than 500,000 in May of 2019.[516] The Iranian government responded to the maximum pressure campaign by announcing incremental withdrawals from its commitments under the JCPOA and by messaging at the end of 2018 that if it could not export oil, then its Gulf neighbors would not be allowed to export oil either.[517]

Iran's incremental withdrawals from its JCPOA commitments were its diplomatic and economic levers in its counter pressure campaign and also played a significant role in its military efforts. Iran's rollback of its JCPOA obligations took advantage of a divergence between the E3 (France, Germany and the United Kingdom) and the Trump administration, created by the latter's unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA, and put pressure on the E3 to provide some economic incentive to stay within the agreement. The result was a lack of unity and trust between the U.S. and major European allies on Iran policy. When Iran eventually took military action to reduce the oil exports of its Gulf

neighbours, the rift in the trans-Atlantic relationship hampered any collective response. In one instance, some European allies went so far as to cast doubt on the U.S. administration's assertion of Iran's culpability, despite the available video and pictorial evidence.[518] The division proved advantageous to Iran in managing responses to the military component of its counter pressure campaign.

Iran's military component was not exclusive to the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula. Iran had already established a useful regional presence in its efforts to push U.S., Israeli, and European influence out of the Middle East and could ramp up activities across the region, primarily in Iraq, for added pressure. Using its proxies in Iraq, Iran has frequently attacked the U.S. embassy compound in Baghdad with rockets, which continues as of this writing.[519] Prior to and during the maximum pressure, Iran had proliferated capabilities to multiple proxies throughout the region in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. Those proxies used such capabilities – namely rockets, drones, and missiles – in their own military operations.

The aforementioned attack on Abqaiq and Khurais is worth reviewing in some detail for what it portends for future proxy use in Iran's strategic sabotage. On 14 September 2019, several drones struck Saudi Aramco's Abqaiq oil refining facility and Khurais oil field with severe results. [520] The Houthis claimed responsibility in their ongoing war with Saudi Arabia.[521] The scale and sophistication of the attack strongly suggested the attack was beyond the Houthis' capability.[522] The debris from the missiles and drones also contradicted the Houthis' claim.[523] Furthermore, Saudi Arabia's air defense systems were bypassed, suggesting the origin of the attack was not from the south, where air defenses were the most concentrated, but from the north and northeast.[524] The physical strikes seemed to confirm that orientation as well.[525] The evidence from the Abqaiq attack suggests Iran conducted the strike using more sophisticated capabilities than what was provided the Houthis, but under the guise that the Houthis were responsible. The war context of the Houthis' assertion and the ambiguity around the origins of the attack gave Iran some measure of deniability, allowed Iran to play on the lack of unity between the E3 and the U.S. administration, and complicated any response.

As of this writing, Iran's counter pressure campaign has demonstrated many significant trends for the future of its use of proxies in strategic sabotage in the Middle East. First, Iran's ability to ramp up pressure through multiple proxies across the Middle East is likely to be a new defining characteristic. Additionally, direct Iranian intervention using sophisticated capabilities disguised as a proxy's action is likely to be more commonplace. This tactic is particularly the case as Iran proliferates not just the weaponry but the capability to produce the weaponry as well. In this scenario, Iran could maintain a production line that mirrors those of its proxies in terms of components and parts, but with better guidance systems and range, making it increasingly difficult to assign blame to Iran and further complicating responses to Iranian military action in the region.

Conclusion

Iran has successfully employed various proxy groups to further its foreign policy goals since the 1979 Islamic Revolution and ousting of the Shah. It began using proxies in Lebanon where it backed Hezbollah in reaction to Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon. Iran has since found success working through proxy groups in Gaza, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. This success has emboldened Iran's use of proxies, an approach that will only be altered by a decisive change in international response. Currently, the U.S. and its partners and allies have followed a conventional response: economic sanctions on specific organizations, businesses, and personnel; attempts at diplomatic isolation; interdiction of arms shipments to proxies; and countering Iran's narrative and highlighting Iranian nefarious activities. In and of themselves, these actions are necessary but insufficient to change Iran's use of proxy forces for the purpose of strategic sabotage.

A more nuanced approach is necessary, one that acknowledges that central governments are sometimes the drivers of instability domestically, regionally, and internationally. The U.S. and its allies and partners need to gain a deeper appreciation of the domestic politics of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen to identify the appropriate levers of change. Locating and supporting others with whom to collaborate is an area in which SOF can assist, by highlighting fractures within proxy groups and within the domestic environment that can be used toward applying pressure against malicious Iranian activities.

The U.S., allies, and partners should respond by leveraging SOF and allowing them to accomplish what they do best – create opportunities through global understanding and placement. SOF are known for their organic cultural and regional expertise and worldwide placement and access. Working with allies and partners, SOF can blunt Iranian use of proxies for strategic sabotage by taking a page out of the Iranian playbook. Iran understands and exploits the local political environment by sowing dissent among various sectarian factions or creating cleavages to work with tractable leaders.

SOF could do the same with enough authorities and permissions. SOF can also erode Iranian support to proxy groups through local actors marginalized by Iranian proxy support. This approach requires an understanding of the political, social, and religious dynamics present in the region and the willingness to modify the campaign as local conditions change. Of course, U.S. SOF cannot do this alone, but with the right partners and allies moving beyond a conventional only approach is possible.

If left unchecked, Iran will expand its use of proxies into other suitable states and theatres. Much like Russia's use of "little green men" in Ukraine, Iran will use its IRGC forces to assist proxies and take a more active role. The ambiguity of who is directing and conducting attacks will continue. The U.S. and its allies' and partners' operations in the region will be hampered and come under increasing risk of attack from rockets, missiles, and drones. Determining the source of such attacks will become more difficult and require deeper investigation to hold those responsible accountable – whittling away at deterrents and credible responses. Only by buttressing local partners can U.S. and like-minded allies and partners' SOF be successful in diminishing Iran's use of proxies for strategic sabotage.

CHAPTER 11

MASKIROVKA IN RUSSIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS

Nevin McFarlane

In August 2014, the tide was turning in the fight against Russian-backed rebel forces in Eastern Ukraine. Lines of communication between separatist forces had almost been cut and they were on the verge of defeat as Ukrainian troops advanced on the town of Ilovaisk. However, events in and around Ilovaisk that month, namely armed Russian intervention, altered the balance of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine and pushed the Ukrainian government into signing the Minsk Protocol.[526] Importantly, Russia was not an official party to the conflict and the Kremlin denied any Russian involvement. In their actions and denials there are many elements of *maskirovka* or deception, which can have consequences just as severe and unexpected as those of sabotage in military operations.

What is Maskirovka?

Maskirovka is the Russian word used to describe deception and translates to "something masked."[527] It is used to create surprise, confuse the enemy and is ultimately used as a force multiplier on the battlefield. It also involves predicting your opponent's response and planning several moves ahead as one would do in a game of chess. Major Morgan Maier explained, "*Maskirovka* as Russian military science includes a broad set of principles, forms, and characteristics that address issues related to creating and maintaining a false reality for the enemy, concealing truth, and maintaining operational security to perpetuate deceptions."[528] Maier further points out that there is a great difference between Russian and Western schools of thought on military deception. Western militaries work to preserve their legitimacy among the public and allies. Conversely, the Russian military takes a "no holds barred" approach and is willing to sacrifice legitimacy in the name of surprise.[529]

CHAPTER 11

The idea of *maskirovka* is much broader than simple concealment. Charles L. Smith, an academic who studied maskirovka during the Cold War, described five forms of the tactic: concealment, imitation, simulation, demonstration and disinformation.[530] Concealment goes beyond camouflaging troops and can extend to hiding the nationality of troops involved in a conflict. Imitation, simulation and demonstration involve the creation of false positions, and feints on the battlefield to confuse one's opponent. Disinformation involves the presentation of false information, usually based on an original truth to give it a sense of legitimacy. This methodology has been widely used throughout the Cold War by the Soviets and in recent Russian history.

Maskirovka has its modern origins with the Red Army during the Second World War and it was used extensively throughout the Cold War. However, through this period it began to be applied beyond military operations. Elements of the strategy were used off the battlefield in disinformation operations such as the Soviet effort to blame the AIDS virus on American laboratory experiments.[531] In recent years this tactic has been utilized by Russia in the annexation of Crimea, the attempted assassination of former intelligence officer turned British double-agent Sergei Skripal and even their efforts to conceal the use of doping by Russian athletes in the Olympics. The outcome of these operations and subsequent denial by Russian officials at all levels serves to create and perpetuate confusion and ambiguity on the global stage. The remainder of this chapter will focus on the Battle of Ilovaisk, which took place in August of 2014 and witnessed the Russia use *maskirovka* to defeat the Ukrainian troops and force them into negotiations. This approach is typical of Russian behaviour in military operations and will be used to highlight some key themes.

The Battle of Ilovaisk

The Ukrainian Army was overwhelmed when they first faced Russian-backed rebels in Eastern Ukraine in 2014. To assist the regular army, Ukraine raised volunteer battalions of citizen soldiers. These troops had little to no training and were often armed with nothing larger than crew-served weapons. Despite these setbacks, Ukrainian forces were making headway in August of 2014 by breaking the separatist lines of communication between Donetsk and Luhansk, effectively isolating the rebel forces in each province. One of the key towns that Ukrainian forces needed to seize in order to fully sever the lines

of communication was Ilovaisk. In preparing the operation, intelligence reports about the strength of rebel defences in the area were unclear. Despite the lack of clarity in these reports, the Ukrainian leadership decided that volunteer forces would make up the bulk up the attacking force.

Figure 11.1 : Donbass Region

The first assault began on 10 August and almost immediately Russian troops were interfering in the attack.[532] There are reports that during the initial assault, GRU (*Glavnoye razvedyvatel'noye upravleniye*/foreign military intelligence agency) Special Forces positioned themselves between two of the volunteer battalions in order to disrupt the volunteer forces. By selectively engaging Ukrainian forces, the Russian forces managed to convince the volunteers that they were exchanging friendly fire and created confusion on the battlefield.[533] This confusion combined with poor communications and subpar weaponry forced the volunteers to withdraw from the city.

On 18 August, the Ukrainian forces made a second attempt to take the city. Regular troops were set to surround the city in order to cut it off from reinforcements, while the volunteers assaulted the city itself. The two sides

fought to a stalemate along the railway line at the centre of the city, with Ukrainians on the western half, and Russian backed rebels on the eastern side. Local Ukrainian commanders continually asked for reinforcements hoping to take back the initiative, but to no avail. Starting on 23 August, reports were received that columns of Russian military vehicles were entering Ukraine near Amvrosiivka.[534] Most of these reports were met with disbelief and were ignored by the higher-level Ukrainian commanders.[535] As Russian troops flooded into the area there was sporadic fighting between Ukrainian troops and the mixed Russian and separatist fighters in the days that followed. During that time a dozen Russian soldiers were captured in one engagement, which Ukraine used as proof that regular Russian troops had joined the fight, despite the denials being offered by the Kremlin at the time.[536] By 27 August the Ukrainian forces at Ilovaisk were surrounded and running low on ammunition and supplies.

The following day the local Ukrainian commanders made contact with the leadership of the rebel forces to create a "green corridor" through which the Ukrainian troops could withdraw peacefully. An agreement was reached for the embattled troops to leave the following morning. However, at 2300 hours that night, mere hours before their planned departure, the Ukrainian commanders were informed that the terms had changed and that they would have to lay down their weapons in order to leave unharmed. The Ukrainians would not give up their weapons and decided to withdraw upon the previously established corridors. Two separate groups of Ukrainian troops departed at 0830 hours on the morning of 29 August, one to the north and another to the south. After crossing through the first lines of rebel troops, the two Ukrainian convoys already exhausted and low on ammunition were ambushed by Russian and separatist forces who had pre-established positions to engage the green corridor. Between 100-200 Ukrainian soldiers were killed in the ambush, many more were taken prisoner, and a few managed to escape on foot.[537] A week after the fighting ended the Ukrainian government signed the first of the Minsk accords which committed Ukraine to recognizing the autonomy of areas in Eastern Ukraine while the separatists agreed to lay down their arms.[538]

Maskirovka During the Battle of Ilovaisk

What effect did the Russian actions at Ilovaisk have? During the initial assault, GRU troops managed to confuse the ill-trained volunteers and disrupt the

initial offensive. The follow-on attack was also disrupted with the introduction of large numbers of Russian troops in the area. With their support the separatist forces managed to surround the Ukrainians, a feat they likely could not have accomplished on their own. While it is not known how much of a role the Russians played in the truce negotiations, eyewitness accounts confirm that the Russian troops did participate in the ambush of 29 August that ultimately ended the battle.[539] Additionally, the surprise attack removed several line units and their equipment from the Ukrainian order of battle.

In analyzing the battle and comparing it to the forms of *maskirovka* outlined by Charles Smith, there are two key forms used. First, Russian forces utilized concealment tactics, as they never admitted to intentionally funneling their troops into Ukraine during this incident. Adding to that, the Russian troops and their vehicles bore no recognizable national insignia and blended in among other separatist troops.[540] The second form of *maskirovka* used was disinformation. The denial of the presence of Russian troops, as well as the fake truce, are all examples of disinformation. This disinformation serves to create ambiguity and confusion on the battlefield.

What purpose was served by introducing Russian troops to a seemingly insignificant battle in eastern Ukraine? Prior to Ilovaisk, the Ukrainian troops, as ill-prepared as they were for fighting the Russian-backed rebels, had been making progress in the conflict. Had they been able to take Ilovaisk, the lines of communication between the central outposts of Donetsk and Luhansk would have been severed. Adding to the geographical significance there was symbolism at play, as 24 August 2014 was the 23rd anniversary of Ukrainian independence.[541] The Russians may have perceived that the Ukrainian failure may have made Ukrainians everywhere question the strength of their independence from Russia. Furthermore, the unannounced deployment of Russian troops also managed to alter the initiative of the campaign against the Ukrainian rebels and forced the Ukrainian government to sign the Minsk agreement only one week after the ambush at Ilovaisk.

Conclusion

This case study shows why Russia values the force multiplying effects of *maskirovka* and may use similar tactics in other conflict zones. First, they may use them to covertly interfere in conflicts they may not be openly involved in

in order to alter the initiative in their favour. Secondly, they will use it to send symbolic messages. This theme can be seen in numerous other examples from around the world in recent years such as their involvement in Syria and the attempted assassination of Sergei Skripal. Lastly, the Russians want to create confusion and ambiguity both on and off the battlefield. As such, the Battle of Ilovaisk serves as a perfect microcosm for other Russian actions taken across the globe. The involvement of a few soldiers, followed by complete denial, served to create confusion and doubt about what may have occurred. These actions continue to occur in conflict areas around the world. Significantly, the consequences that follow instances of *maskirovka* can be just as dangerous and unexpected as any traditional sabotage event and need to be considered when examining any area of the world in which Russia has a vested interest.

CHAPTER 12

SEEKING JANUS: THE 2007 CYBER ATTACKS ON ESTONIA

Tony Balasevicius

Sabotage is a deliberate action focused on destructive, disruptive or obstructive military, paramilitary, economic, or political actions. It is carried out by a nation's agent or proxy to hinder an opponent's political objective(s) or to further one's own. In order to achieve the maximum impact, with the least amount of risk saboteurs typically try to hit the weakest link in the security chain while still being able to achieve their goals.[542] Moreover, saboteurs will often attempt to conceal their identities in order to avoid the consequences of their actions. By doing so, they hope to delay or prevent invoking effective counter measures to address their actions.[543]

As sabotage can target many different parts of an organizational construct it can take many different forms and vary in its complexity. For example, it can be highly technical in nature such as a government-supported *coup de main* where a great detail of planning, logistics, and coordination are needed for success. Or, it can comprise of simple acts that can be undertaken by individuals requiring little or no training. In such cases, actions can be as simple as delaying important government decisions, or they can be so bold as the destruction of crucial equipment and infrastructure.[544]

In fact, the scope and amount of activity carried out by saboteurs is only limited by the resources, skills, and opportunities available to them. This flexibility allows sabotage to be used as an isolated act or as a weapon in combination with other actions.[545]

Limited resources combined with risk has resulted in sabotage operations remaining local affairs often focused on the highest priority or profile targets. However, this situation is changing. With the widespread adoption of

modern communications, particularly the internet, both state and non-state actors have become increasingly reliant on worldwide interconnectivity. Although, this new connectivity brings with it a number of advantages it also creates structural weaknesses. These structural weaknesses are now providing saboteurs with unique opportunities and expanded reach to conduct their operations.

Although, the basic principles and outcomes for sabotage have remained unchanged in the digital/information age, the tools used to achieve those outcomes have evolved. Malicious software, viruses, and hackers have now become the weapons of choice for individuals and groups wanting to disrupt government activities, target specific industrial systems, paralyze commercial activity, or change policy direction within a targeted country by sabotage.

An early example of digital/information age sabotage can be seen with the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). During the early 1980s, the CIA was alleged to have tried to sabotage the Soviet economy through the covert transfer of technologies that contained hidden malfunctions. This approach included software. It is believed that it was corrupt software provided by this operation that eventually triggered a large explosion in a Siberian natural gas pipeline in 1982.[546]

A more recent example of cyber sabotage is the Stuxnet computer worm. This virus was reportedly designed to destroyed numerous centrifuges in Iran's Natanz uranium enrichment facility by causing the centrifuges to burn themselves out.[547] It generated significant media attention at the time of its discovery in 2010 – because it was the first known virus specifically designed to cripple or destroy hardware. Of greater interest, is the fact that it appeared to have been created as a joint effort between by the U.S. National Security Agency, the CIA, and Israeli intelligence for government sabotage operations.[548]

In April of 2007, another instance of digital sabotage occurred in the form of an all-out cyber assault on a country. In this instance a number of coordinated attacks were launched on Estonia by so called, "digital activists" from within the Russian diaspora. As Estonia was considered one of the most "connected" countries in Europe at the time of the incident, it is generally believed this attack was specifically targeted to obstruct government operations, and

significantly disrupt the country's economy in order to effect change in its policy direction.[549]

The events that unfolded in Estonia in the spring of 2007, serve to illustrate the increasing ability of saboteurs to use digital tools to inflict damage, disrupt society and challenge the policies of nation-states.[550] This chapter will examine the cyber attack on Estonia and provide an overview of the country's response. It will review possible reasons behind the attack and outline some of the steps that have been taken in its aftermath to better prepare states for such a situation in the future. Finally, it will look at what this attack means to the future of cyber sabotage. In order to better understand the attacks, for context, it is important to first review the political situation between Estonia and Russia at the time of the incident.

Background on the Attacks

Historically, there has always been an underlying degree of tension between Estonia and Russia. Prior to the start of the Second World War much of this tension was based on continuous Russian encroachment and settlement into eastern Estonia. Many of the current issues dividing the two countries have their genesis with the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States in 1940 and its subsequent occupation of the country during the Cold War from 1947-1991.

In an attempt to increase cohesion within the Eastern Bloc but ultimately "Russify" Estonian culture completely, the Kremlin pursued an aggressive policy of resettlement. In the process, it relocated hundreds of thousands of ethnic Russians into Estonia throughout much of the Cold War period. With the dissolution of the USSR in 1989, ethnic Russians accounted for an incredible 26 percent of the country's total population.[551]

When Estonia finally regained its independence in 1991, the Government moved quickly to implemented a number of policies specifically designed to reduce Russia's overall influence on both its political destiny and its culture. Over the years, these policies have served to frustrate Moscow as it sought to maintain influence in what it believes is its sphere of influence in the Baltic States. [552]

In January 2007, the Estonian government decided to relocate a Soviet-era grave site and monument honoring the sacrifice of Russian troops during

the Second World War.[553] The monument, located in the center of Tallinn, had become extremely controversial. For ethic Estonians it was a constant reminder of the Soviet occupation and oppression. For the Russian minority in the country, however, it represented Russia as the liberator. As a result, it became a lightning rod for tensions between pro-Kremlin and Estonian nationalist movements. In an attempt to defuse the situation, the Estonian Government tried to come up with what it believed was a compromise solution.[554]

As such, the Estonian Government decided to move the monument, along with the accompanying remains, to a nearby military cemetery just on the outskirts of the city. There, it could still be a focal point of remembrance but in a more appropriate and far less visible setting. The planned move infuriated leaders in Moscow. Concerned that its former Soviet republic was cutting ties to its post-war history, the Russian Upper House took immediate action. It adopted a resolution demanding the Estonian Government stop legislation to remove the monument. Russia's First Vice Prime Minister, Sergei Ivanov, went so far as to suggest a boycott of Estonian goods and services.[555]

In the end, these threats were not sufficient to deter the Estonians and work on the monument's relocation began on the morning of 26 April 2007. Unfortunately, these actions were not without incident. As work began, pro-monument protesters gathered in a peaceful demonstration at the site, in an effort to stop the move. When it became clear that the effort was not going to succeed the situation turned violent. According to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), "On 26 April 2007 Tallinn erupted into two nights of riots and looting. One hundred and fifty-six people were injured, one person died and 1,000 people were detained."[556]

Estonian police were eventually able to regain control of the situation but not before the rioters looted and caused significant damage to buildings in the surrounding area. What few understood at the time was that this incident proved to be only the beginning of what would become a far more coordinated and prolonged action.[557]

The Attacks

On 27 April 2007, the following day, the country was hit with a series of cyber-attacks on its networks and information systems. The attacks, which

lasted for 22 days, were carried out in two phases. The first phase comprised of a series of un-coordinated attacks that targeted high-profile websites including the President's office, Parliament, police, political parties, and a number of major media outlets. The majority of the hacks involved different forms of denial of service (DoS) and distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks.[558]

A DoS attack is designed to shut down a specific machine, website, or network by making it inaccessible to its intended users. This type of an attack is normally carried out by flooding the target with traffic, or sending it information that triggers a crash.[559] A DDoS attack occurs when multiple systems target a single system for a DoS attack. In this way the targeted network is bombarded with packets from multiple locations that are re-routed through different countries.[560]

Heavily involved in this first phase were low-level hackers, commonly referred to as "script-kiddies." Script kiddies are usually younger web page defacers. At times, they unwittingly aid and abet criminals or professional hackers through their constant probing and compromising of systems. In this case they were able to hack their targets using copied scripts or rented botnets created and distributed by professional hackers.[561] In the attack on Estonia, evidence indicated that the hackers planning the attack, encouraged script-kiddies in Russian chat rooms and other online forums to go after the Estonian sites. Once the script-kiddies started the process the sophisticated hackers moved in to do their work under the noise being created while remaining anonymous.[562]

Unfortunately, these initial attacks where just the opening round as matters would get much worse before getting better. In the second and main attack phase, which occurred between 30 April and 18 May, the attacks became automated as much of the attack coordination was delegated to the command-and-control servers of real botnets.[563] These are a collection of internet-connected devices infected with malware that hackers are able to control remotely.[564]

This phase ran in four waves of differing intensities, focusing on different targets in each wave while using different attack techniques.[565] According to Andreas Schmidt of the Delft University of Technology, the "first wave" of this

phase, "occurred on 4 May and focused on websites and DNS [Domain Name Systems] systems. The 'second wave' ran between 9 and 11 May and hit primarily government websites and financial services. The 'third wave' on May 15 included botnet-based DDoS attacks against government websites and financial industry. The 'fourth wave' again consisted of attacks against governmental websites and banks."[566]

Once these attacks started, Estonian online services went down in quick succession as banks, media outlets and various government agencies were hit with unprecedented levels of internet traffic. Damien McGuinness, a correspondent reporting for the BBC, describe the attack as follows, "Massive waves of spam were sent by botnets and huge amounts of automated online requests swamped servers. The result for Estonians citizens was that cash machines and online banking services were sporadically out of action; government departments and officials were unable to communicate with each other on email; and newspapers and broadcasters suddenly found they couldn't deliver the news."[567]

Fortunately, these types of attack do not typically result in the theft or the loss of information. Their primary purpose is to force the victim to spend time and money dealing with the outcomes.[568] As such, they are designed to create disruption, confusion and frustration for the intended victim(s). However, these actions did "effectively close down the 'always on' nature of the digitally-dependent state of Estonia."[569]

In the short-term, the attacks blocked access to information and services that the country depended on and this could have had profound economic and potentially social consequences. Had the attack gone on much longer there could have also been a far greater consequence to Estonia and its reputation as a safe place to do business.[570]

A Coordinated Economic Effort to Achieve Maximum Impact

Although the cyber attacks took most of the international media spotlight, it was economic pressure that caused the greater amount of short-term damage to Estonia. Once work started on the monument, trade relations

between the two countries deteriorated rapidly. As time went on, the Russian Government continually increased its pressure on the Estonian economy. According to Anastasia Nevskaya, of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, the Estonian government ended up losing a great deal of Russia's business and investment as a result of the crisis. She reveals that the transit industry was one of the biggest losers as Estonia handled 25 percent of Russia's petroleum product along with large amounts of coal, forest, chemical, and metallurgical industries' exports to the European Union.[571]

It has been estimated that shipments moving through Estonia were down by as much as 41 percent between January-March 2008, compared to the similar period of 2007.[572] The full impact of Russian actions likely cost the Estonian economy close to 8 million krooni (0.5 billion euros) per year. This amount is about approximately three percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).[573] In addition to lost revenues, there was also a mass exodus of both Russian companies and investors from the country. Much of this money re-orientated its focus to neighbouring countries while some simply moved back to the Russian side of the border.[574]

Estonia's Response

Although, there was little Estonia could do about the economic pressure it was facing, it was able to deal with the cyber attacks as they occurred. According to Major Max Gordon, of the United States Air Force, "Many IT [information technology] experts in the country had done an impressive amount of preparation in combating possible threats to web services."[575] He explains, this was "due in part to the country's need for sophisticated security in the face of an early adoption of web-based voting."[576]

Nationally, a task force of cyber security experts, along with election authorities from the police, intelligence services, and other agencies, had been assembled in preparation for the April 2007 elections. Fortuitously, this task force remained in place after the vote when different intelligence agencies started receiving mounting evidence of possible DDoS attacks on the government.[577]

Despite advance knowledge of the strikes, Estonia struggled in the face of both the sophistication and scale of the attacks. Thankfully, the DDoS attack methodology was very familiar to cyber security experts so they were able to

counter the threat quite easily. The key was to identify the sources of attack, so that the unwanted web traffic could be blocked. Due to the massive size of the attack, blocking all the sites would take both time and resources.[578]

Another issue was that the country's front line cyber experts were struggling with the adaptability of the hackers. They were finding that as they attempted to defeat/stop incoming assaults by filtering out the botnet's brand of attack, relatively shortly later, the stream of attack would get past the defenses because the hackers modified the botnet to bypass the new filters that had been put into place.[579] Gordon suggests, "This type of adaptability would indicate a very active, persistent, and sophisticated hacker/s carrying out the attack."[580] It did not help that the attacks were coming from all around the world. This widescale approach meant that blocking all the attacks at their source would require significant international cooperation.

In the end, such cooperation is exactly what happened. In addition to its own resources, Estonia was able to garner the assistance of cyber experts from Finland, Germany, Israel, Slovenia and others to eventually restore all of their network operations. In the process, it also received help from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Computer Emergency Response Team (CERTs) which provided additional assistance. In addition, the EU's European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA), which produced technical assessments of the developing situation, also assisted.[581]

Likely Attribution for the Attacks

Saboteurs typically try to conceal their identities and the 2007 cyber attacks on Estonia were no exception. Despite, the extensive media coverage and very public form of the attacks, only one person was ever charged. Although Moscow has always denied involvement in these attacks, there is compelling circumstantial evidence to suggest high-level government involvement. For example, the demonstrations, concurrent economic disruption and overall sophistication of the actual cyber attacks, particularly in its later stages, all occurred in conjunction with the scheduled move of the Tallinn monument. The only country protesting the move at the time was Russia so it is not difficult to conclude that these actions were likely a coordinated act of hostility on their part to stop the work.[582]

In addition to the timing and sophistication of the attacks, Estonian and international cyber experts were able to track the source of many of the individual attacks back to Russia. In fact, they were even able to trace one source from a computer within the Kremlin.[583]

It is also clear that the attacks were politically motivated as many of the hacks contained messages related to the conflict surrounding the statue. It is difficult to accept that such actions would have occurred from inside Russia without at least "unofficial" government approval.

After the incident, there was a total lack of cooperation by Russian authorities with any investigations into the attacks. This refusal was in the face of clear evidence that most of the activity was generated from Russian-based forums and, at the time of the attacks, these fora indicated a clear and widespread interest in attacking Estonia. Moreover, many of the copied scripts and instructions for the attack were described in detail on both Russian language forums and various websites, all of which were available to anyone interested in participating in the attacks.[584]

When taken together, it is not difficult to conclude that Russia's political elite were playing a leading role in the attacks. Based on this assertion, the question remains, why would Russia be interested in carrying out these attacks in the first place?

Russian Rationale Behind the Attacks

In the context of the specific situation, analysts believe the attacks were carried out to convince the Estonian government to stop the relocation of the memorial. Using cyber warfare as the major line of attack was logical in this case for two reasons. First, this type of an attack provides near perfect deniability for the government.[585] Secondly, for a country that has been described as "The Most Wired in Europe," hitting the country's public digital services would have the greatest effect on the largest number of individuals, government agencies and businesses at the lowest cost.[586]

These actions, however, were likely part of a much larger strategy aimed at maintaining Russian influence over the country and possibility to serve as a warning for others in the Baltic region. To achieve this strategic outcome, the

attacks were likely an attempt to destabilize the Estonian social system and undermine the country's economy. In so doing, the Russians hoped to weaken Estonian ties to both the EU and NATO.[587]

Analysts have also suggested that Russia's influence campaign may have been seeking to demonstrate to Estonian citizens that their own government (and NATO) was unwilling and or unable to protect them or, even capable of pursuing the adversary responsible for the attacks. Such a demonstration would weaken trust and confidence in both the national government, as well as in the established international collective security structures protecting the Baltic region.[588]

It is also possible that the Russians may have also wanted to test and refine their developing concept, as well as its inherent capabilities, of what they would later refer to as *New Generation Warfare.* This approach was based on the same concept the world witnessed in 2014, with the Russian assaults on Crimea and the Ukraine. In fact, this situation was an ideal opportunity to functionally test cyber weapons in coordination with other strategically ambiguous measures such as the protest potential of the population and economic sanctions. Moreover, they would able be able to closely monitor and evaluate the responses to these measures.[589]

In looking at the emerging concept of Russia's *New Generation Warfare,* Dr. Rain Ottis, a professor and founder of the Centre for Digital Forensics and Cyber Security at the Tallinn University of Technology, provides an interesting link between these attacks and Chinese strategies regarding the concept of the People's War in the digital era. He states, "In an article about possible Chinese strategies for invading Taiwan, [Chris] Wu (2004)[590] points out the possibility of using the information age equivalent of the concept of people's war. In the context of cyber attacks, this means that ordinary citizens of a state can be motivated to use the resources under their control to independently attack enemy systems in order to confuse the defenders."[591] He adds, "Amidst all the noisy and ill-coordinated attacks, more professional intrusions can then be carried out, supplemented with physical attacks to take out the command-and-control systems of the opponent. (Wu 2004) The beauty of people's war is that it provides near perfect deniability for the government or any other entity that is behind the attacks."[592] This assessment is interesting

given it is precisely what the mobilization of the "script-kiddies" accomplished during the Estonian attack.

Finally, another possibility is the fact that 2007 was an election year in Russia so it is likely that the attacks could have also been a distraction and attempt to unite the Russian people against a common enemy before those elections occurred later that year. It is also likely that Russian motives included a combination, or possibly all, of these factors.[593]

RUSSIAN STRATEGIC SUCCESS WITH ITS INFLUENCE OPERATIONS

If the main goal for Russia was to maintain influence over Estonia by attempting to destabilize its society and weaken its ties to the EU and NATO, then the attacks were a failure. In the end, Estonia did not stop work on moving the monument, and it was able to hold off the cyber onslaught. In the process, the country was able to achieve a number of political gains for itself. Specifically, it was able to establish closer ties with the West. According to Professor Andreas Schmidt, "the attacks and the respective response turned Estonia into a household brand for all matters cybersecurity, which likely helped to secure the hosting of the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence and EU Agency for large-scale IT systems." He argued, "Its vanguard status was only increased by Estonia's provision of support in some international cyber-crime cases. Politically, Estonia managed to secure an increased commitment from NATO and the EU, thereby advancing its strategic foreign policy goal of strengthening integration into Western institutions."[594]

Policy and Strategy Responses Since 2007

Another area where the attacks had an impact was in highlighting to the international community the importance of cyber security. Saboteurs attempt to conceal their identities in part to avoid the consequences of their actions. By doing this, they hoped to delay or prevent invoking effective counter measures to address their actions. In the case of the 2007 cyber attacks on Estonia the opposite occurred.

Both during and after the cyber attacks on Estonia, NATO, and EU member states began to take a far more serious interest in cyber security than they had previously. To this end, the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of

Excellence was established in Tallinn, Estonia. This Centre became a NATO-accredited research and training facility focused on cyber defence education, consultation, lessons learned, and research and development.[595]

About a year later, at NATO's Bucharest Summit in April 2008, cyber security was a priority agenda item. Discussions at the Summit led NATO to adopt a policy on Cyber Defence and to establish the Brussels-based Cyber Defence Management Authority (CDMA) to "centralise cyber defence capabilities across the Alliance."[596] In August of that same year, Tallinn became home to NATO's cyber-security headquarters.[597]

The initiatives did not stop there. In November 2010, the EU released its cyber security strategy, calling for an integrated response to cyber-security threats, as well as a significant expansion of the EU Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) duties beyond a purely analytical role. In addition, both NATO and the EU announced plans to establish CERTs for EU institutions, hold multinational cyber-defense simulations, and create a joint European cyber-crime platform," along with steps to develop strong, integrated Internet defense capabilities.[598]

Since that time, the NATO Computer Incident Response Capability Technical Centre (NCIRC TC) has become operational.[599] It includes the NATO Communications and Information Systems School in Latina, Italy, as well as the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, which also conducts cyber defence-related education and training to support Alliance operations, strategy, policy, doctrine and procedures. In addition, the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy also fosters strategic thinking on political-military matters, including on cyber defence issues.[600]

Importantly, in February 2016, NATO and the EU concluded a Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence to help both organisations better prevent and respond to cyber attacks. This Technical Arrangement provides a framework for exchanging information and the sharing of best practices between various emergency response teams.[601]

In sum, rather then delaying or preventing effective counter measures, the cyber attacks on Estonia actually became the stimulus for action on internet and cyber security in Estonia, within the premier regional collective security organization, as well as worldwide. In this case, the attempt at sabotage by Russia back-fired.

Implications for the Future of Sabotage

What then can the cyber attacks on Estonia in 2007 tell us about the future of sabotage in the information age? For saboteurs wishing to cause obstruction, disruption, or destruction while having plausible deniability cyber actions appear to provide an ideal solution moving forward. Moreover, they provide a great deal of flexibility as they can be very simple and focused as was the case of the corrupt software operation that triggered the explosion in a Siberian natural gas pipeline. Conversely, they can be focused and more complex as in the case of the Stuxnet computer worm, or they can be broad and complex such as the attacks on Estonia.

Primitive cyber attacks take very little time and effort to organize, while defending against them requires a major investment in both time and resources. Unfortunately, as countries continue to invest in highly developed network infrastructure they will become increasingly vulnerable to digital sabotage.[602]

Of greater significance is the fact that Estonia has showcased, to the world, that cyber space is being rapidly militarized. With this militarization comes the dangers of both an increase in the acts along with a greater verity of sabotage. In the event of war, all of a targeted country's critical systems could fall under a simultaneous concentrated cyber attack from thousands of professional, well-trained and equipped cyber attackers who control an army of militia with just enough training to be dangerous.[603] In this regard, sabotage will become easier and far more prevalent as the cyber domain continues to evolve.

Conclusion

Information age technology has provided the world with a great number of benefits, but with it comes greater dangers. These perils include transnational sabotage, cyber terrorism, information warfare, and the outright attack on a nation-state's sovereignty in cyberspace.

The 2007 cyber attacks on Estonian have shown that states and autonomous transnational networks, or a combination of the two, have the capability to target a nation's digital networks. Beyond just targeting, and should they so desire, such states and networks can disrupt or cripple its social order and/or critical infrastructure through various acts of sabotage. Ironically, the

more technically sophisticated the targeted nation-state or organization, the greater the impact. Unfortunately, the effect of the cyber attacks on Estonia will likely encourage other groups to do the same in the future. As everyone with an internet connection has access to the battlespace in this domain.[604]

The challenge for democracies is to find the right balance between Internet freedom and providing adequate monitoring, early warning and defensive systems. These systems will need to be combined with a far more aggressive concept of cyber-security cooperation across all borders. Cooperation and a flexible approach to problem solving were the keys to Estonian cyber success. This approach must remain the model for success against sabotage, cyber terrorism, information warfare and an all-out network attack in the future.[605]

CHAPTER 13

REGIME CHANGE IN VENEZUELA?

Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn

Regime change is nothing new. Arguably, the ultimate act of strategic sabotage is to actually organize/support/put in motion, actions that will lead to the downfall of a leader/regime that is counter to the perceived national interests of the country engaging in sabotaging another state. Now, that is not to say that all coup d'états (violent overthrow of an existing government) are acts of strategic sabotage. After all, many internal state regime changes (or attempts) have occurred as a result of coups led by internal military leaders (e.g. Muammer al-Qaddafi in Libya in 1969, Idi Amin in Uganda in 1971, Captain Amadou Sanogo in Mali in 2012). However, many are orchestrated by foreign Governments (e.g. Operation Ajax the overthrow of Prime Minister Mohammed Mosaddeq in Iran by the American and British governments in 1953, or the CIA orchestrated coup, Operation PBSuccess in Guatemala in 1954), or by mercenaries and expats supported by internal and/or foreign entities (e.g. the failed American Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, the failed coup attempt in the Seychelles in 1981 and the failed coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea in 2017.

When done correctly, foreign interference is often difficult to prove even though suspicions may be present. However, when the clandestine nature of the action is compromised it becomes a national embarrassment to those states that are involved and often plays out as comic opera. The botched 2020 Venezuelan "invasion" is more of the latter. Although not definitively proven that the U.S. or Colombia was behind the attempted putsch, it does strongly resemble a great example of strategic sabotage gone bad.

Regime Change – Historical Examples

Regime change is not a new concept. Whether internal coups, sponsored proxy intrigues, blatant mercenary actions or overt external state instigated,

sponsored or led initiatives, regime change has and remains a viable option to achieve political or economic objectives. Examples from the last seven decades provides a wealth of insight.

IRAN – 1953

Operation Ajax was a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) directed overthrow of the democratically elected Prime Minister Muhammad Mossadegh. When Mossadegh nationalized Iran's oil industry, British and American interests were incensed and both powers conspired to overthrow the government and reinstate the monarchy under the shah. Working with Royalist Iranian military officers, the coup began on 15 August but was quickly suppressed. General Fazlollah Zahedi, one of the lead conspirators went into hiding and the shah fled the country. Believing the coup to have failed the CIA called off further action fearing it could be traced to the U.S. However, the station chief in Tehran ignored the directive. On 19 August, large crowds, believed to have been "rented" by the CIA took to the streets. Royalist military officers took control of the pro-shah demonstration and seized the government. The Western friendly shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was then restored. Much of the success was due to the CIA who created considerable unrest in the country giving citizens the clear choice of instability or support for the shah. However, the major oilfields were never returned unconditionally to the major oil companies. Due to the high levels of nationalism the foreign corporations now had to share the wealth with Tehran.[606]

GUATEMALA – 1954

In the aftermath of the 1944 revolution in Guatemala that installed a democratically elected leftist government, American corporations, such as the United Fruit Company, found their land and other assets being increasingly expropriated. As a result, business executives and elites in Guatemala fed the U.S. government and American journalists a steady stream of warnings in the early 1950s that the country was "veering further and further leftward toward Communism."[607] A turning point came when the Board of National Estimates reported to the Head of the CIA on 22 April 1954 that "the Communists now effectively control the political life of Guatemala."[608] The Government of Jacobo Arbenz purchase of Soviet-manufactured armaments from Czechoslovakia that spring further solidified the perception of a Communist take-over. As a result,

the CIA and the U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala launched Operation PBSuccess, which supported and directed chosen Guatemalan military officers to overthrow the Arbenz Government. Key to success was an elaborate psychological warfare campaign that convinced Guatemalan political and military leaders, as well as the public, that a large invasion force was steadily moving towards the nation's capital, which so unnerved Arbenz that the government fell without much of a fight. The CIA then installed ex-Guatemalan military officer Carlos Castillo Armas, who was the leader of a guerilla army that was trained by the CIA with the intention of invading Guatemala from Honduras and Nicaragua.[609]

INDONESIA – 1957

On 25 September 1957, President Dwight Eisenhower authorized the CIA to overthrow the Sukarno Government in Indonesia. CIA paramilitary officers from the Philippines then contacted Indonesian military forces on Sumatra and Sulawesi. Working in concert with the Pentagon, the Americans delivered weapons for distribution to rebel military forces on the two islands. They also financed radio stations that issued anti-Sukarno broadcasts. In February 1958, the Indonesian military bombed the radio stations in Sumatra and established a naval blockade along the coast. In April 1958, in a desperate gamble the CIA began to bomb the outer Indonesian islands. On 18 May, although the Americans intended their participation to be kept secret, U.S. involvement became public when an aircraft on a bombing run piloted by Allen Pope, a contractor for Civil Air Transport, was shot down. American support for the coup attempt was subsequently cancelled and as a result the insurrection died out. The CIA operation was a complete failure. Not only did the CIA underestimate the ability and solidarity of the Indonesian military, but its bombing campaign incensed the local population, which turned them against the anti-government rebels.[610]

CUBA – 1959

On 1 January 1959, the American supported Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista fled the country when Fidel Castro's leftist 26th of July Movement captured a number of major cities in central Cuba.[611] Castro and his group of followers landed in Cuba in December 1956 and began their insurgency. Castro quickly gained traction with the Cuban people because of his charisma and nationalist agenda. Assisting Castro's cause was the increasing corruption, greed

and inefficiency of the Batista government. Although the U.S. was looking at an alternative for Batista, they were leery of Castro because of his leftist leanings. Once he took power, Castro nationalized American owned property and became increasingly friendly with the Soviet Union. As a result, in January 1961, the U.S. severed diplomatic and economic ties with Cuba, as well as legislating trade and travel embargos.[612]

THE BAY OF PIGS, CUBA – 1961

The shadow of a Soviet communist state on the backstep of the U.S. was too much for many American political and military leaders to accept. As a result, on 17 April 1961, 1,400 Cuban exiles, formed into an entity known as Brigade 2506, assisted by the U.S. Navy and Air Force, as well as by the CIA, invaded a swampy Cuban coastal inlet called Bay of Pigs. The intent was to overthrow Castro and his government. The planned invasion counted on support from the Cuban people and even from elements of the Cuban military. The plan was to establish a non-communist government friendly to the United States. However, nothing went according to plan. On the first day, two ships carrying ammunition and supplies were sunk by Cuban aircraft. As a result, the other two ships quickly fled. By the second day, the entire rebel force was surrounded by approximately 20,000 Cuban troops. By the third day, the surviving 1,200 rebels surrendered and were marched off to prison. The American assumption that the "use of the exile brigade would make possible the toppling of Castro without actual aggression by the United States" was proven exceedingly wrong.[613] The failed operation was also instrumental in precipitating the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis when the Soviet Union attempted to deploy nuclear missiles to Cuba as part of its defence agreement with Castro.[614]

CHILE – 1973

On 21 September 1970, Dr. Salvador Allende was declared the victor of a fairly run democratic election. Allende intended to usher in a new era of social democracy, which ran counter to the country's long-standing record for serving landowners, industrialists and financiers. Allende's policies of redistribution of wealth incensed the entrenched Chilean oligarchy.[615] President Richard Nixon so detested Allende and his socialist experiment that he ordered a coup. He authorized ten million dollars and more if required to achieve success.[616] On 11 September 1973, General Augusto Pinochet, the head of the Chilean military,

overthrew Allende and his Popular Unity government. This event marked the start of his 17-year dictatorship.

BENIN – 1977

A military coup in October 1972 led by Major Matthieu Kerekou resulted in the country becoming a Marxist state in December 1974. He nationalized the banks, insurance and oil companies and began an intense "educational" campaign to radicalize the country. In January 1977, a mercenary commando group landed at the airport on the coast at Cotonou and advanced into the city. After three hours, after suffering two casualties, they withdrew. Benin accused Morocco, Togo and Gabon of active involvement. It was later confirmed that those three countries were indeed involved. There was also international suspicion that France had given tacit approval and indirect assistance to the effort to overthrow Kerekou as well.

SEYCHELLES – 1981

On 25 November 1981, a group of 51 mercenaries led by the legendary gun-for-hire Colonel "Mad Mike" Hoare, attempted to overthrow Marxist President France Albert Rene, seize power in the Seychelles and restore the former pro-Western President, James Mancham.[617] The group, which was largely recruited by Hoare in South Africa, traveled to Swaziland by bus posing as beer-drinking vacationers. From there they boarded an Air Swazi commercial flight to the Seychelles. They intended to land and slip through customs with their AK-47 automatic rifles concealed in false-bottom suitcases. Once through the airport they intended to link-up with dissidents on the main island and subsequently seize all of the island's key points, at which time Mancham would be flown in from Kenya.

The plan went awry almost immediately when a customs official spotted a weapon in the bag of one of the last mercenaries to pass through the queue. A firefight broke out, killing one of the mercenaries. In the ensuing bedlam, a group of mercenaries seized the control tower and proceeded to assist an Air India Boeing 727, which was transiting from the Zimbabwean capital of Harare to Bombay via the Seychelles, to land. Subsequently, they hijacked the aircraft and had it flown to Durban, South Africa.

In the aftermath, while Hoare was in South African court for the attempted coup and hijacking with 42 of his mercenaries that escaped the Seychelles, he testified that a former Seychellois minister contacted him in South Africa in 1977 with regard to overthrowing the Seychelles Government. Hoare added that the South African Government had given tacit approval to the coup.[618] In fact, he claimed that his initial contact with the South African government was through an officer of the National Intelligence Service (NIS). Moreover, Hoare revealed that the South African Defense Force actually supplied the weapons to the mercenary force.[619] Particularly damning was the fact that approximately half of the mercenary force was South African, many either active or reserve members of the South African police and defense forces.

South Africa was not the only country implicated. The NIS official captured in the Seychelles revealed that Kenya was also involved. He asserted that the new Mancham Government was to be flown in from Kenya accompanied by police and troops of that country once the coup was successful.

The failed coup simply exacerbated any concerns the West may have had. First, the Seychelles Government imposed two curfews, one on land and one on the sea. Moreover, armed militias patrolled the beaches at night and a number of locals, who allegedly were implicated in the plan were arrested. Furthermore, President Rene gained support of the public, who overwhelmingly resented the mercenary attack. Furthermore, after the coup attempt, French and Soviet warships made regular and prolonged visits to the main port on the island of Mahe and low-flying French reconnaissance aircraft patrolled Seychelles waters on a daily basis. Finally, of the approximate 100 Tanzanian troops that were stationed in the Seychelles prior to the coup, who were in the process of being withdrawn, they were instead reinforced by an additional 400 more soldiers.[620]

MALDIVES – 1988

On 3 November 1988, Maldivian businessman Abdullah Luthufi with the assistance of a force of 150 mercenaries affiliated to a Tamil secessionist organization from Sri Lanka landed on Male, in the Maldive Islands, which are located approximately 590 kilometres southwest of India, aboard fishing trawlers at 0430 hours. They subsequently assaulted the capital city, specifically the military headquarters and presidential palace, in an effort to topple

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Most believed that the former President, Ibrahim Nasir, was behind the attempt. The 1,200 man Maldivian security force, reinforced by 1,600 Indian paratroopers and three frigates defeated the attempted coup.[621]

EQUATORIAL GUINEA – 2004

Equatorial Guinea is well-endowed with a wealth in oil. However, its people are extremely poor. President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who ousted his uncle in a military coup in 1979, embezzled most of the country's wealth for his own purposes. Unhappy with Obiang's reluctance to cooperate with international oil companies, a group of British financiers, which included Sir Mark Thatcher, the son of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, enlisted the assistance of a group of mercenaries, led by former SAS soldier Simon Mann, to seize power in Equatorial Guinea. The plan entailed the soldiers for hire flying from South Africa, where they and the financiers were based, to Zimbabwe where they would pick up weapons and then continue on to Equatorial Guinea. Once in location they would meet up with a vanguard force and proceed to overwhelm the country's security forces by surprise. Once the government was overthrown, Severo Moto, a former minister under Obiang, would take over as president. In return, he promised Thatcher and his fellow financier conspirators the Equatorial Guinea oil rights.

Mann believed that the operation was backed by American, British and South African governments. The apparent support made Mann and his mercenaries so confident that they carelessly spoke of it in bars. Rumours of the coup attempt were passed on to American and British authorities who did nothing to warn Obiang. Nonetheless, on 7 March 2004, Zimbabwean police seized the mercenaries' Boeing 747 at the Harare airport. The aircraft was full of weapons, as well as 64 ex-soldiers, mostly from 32 Buffalo Battalion, a Special Forces unit that fought in South Africa. Almost a day later, Mann's second-in-command and 14 other mercenaries, which made up the advance force, were arrested in Equatorial Guinea.[622]

EQUATORIAL GUINEA – 2017[623]

The 40-year rule of President Obiang was once again challenged on 27 December 2017, when approximately 40 men armed with rocket launchers, rifles and ammunition crossed the border into Equatorial Guinea from

Cameroon. Military forces killed one "mercenary" during a skirmish along the frontier, causing the others to quickly disperse into the forest along the border. Equatorial Guinea Security Minister Nicholas Obama Nchama blamed the alleged coup on mercenaries hired by opposition groups and supported by unnamed "powers". He said the coup attempt had been foiled with the help of the Cameroonian security services. [624]

Most of the given example coup attempts shared some common attributes. These include:

1. Target country gripped by political instability/single leader who was unpopular and lacked credibility/legitimacy;
2. Target country had poorly trained/equipped, unprofessional security forces; and
3. External interests – either foreign state (e.g. economic/political interests) or exiled elite (e.g. former ruling class members). [625]

In addition, the success of coup attempts also shared some characteristics that include:

1. Sound/solid preparatory ground work (e.g. developing a reliable network in country, sound knowledge of cultural drivers, psychological warfare to shape environment);
2. A reliable partner force (i.e. professional, trustworthy, well-trained/equipped, knowledgeable of environment (e.g. terrain, opposition force, politics, societal issues));
3. Public support – prepared to welcome an alternate government;
4. External Support for rebel force – a concentrated, robust backing from sponsoring/supporting state. Particularly, financing, shaping of environment, training/equipping/supporting rebel elements;
5. Weak immediate response from target country security forces; and
6. No external third-party state(s) supporting the target country – i.e. no intervention from third party states to back-up the target country.

Despite the long history of regime change(s) and attempted coups, particularly the factors required for success and those that led to failure, it is somewhat incomprehensible that coup initiatives still persist that repeat failures of the past. The attempted coup in Venezuela in January 2020, is yet another example of the lessons of history being ignored.

CHAPTER 13

Venezuela in Chaos

At one time Venezuela was considered one of, if not the richest, country in Latin America due mainly to its large oil reserves. That assessment has dramatically changed. Since 1998, when Hugo Chávez was first elected president of Venezuela, the country has been governed by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV – Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela). The increasing price of oil at the turn of the century allowed the PSUV to funnel money into services that improved economic and social conditions, albeit a great deal of the country's wealth was appropriated by Chávez and his inner circle. Overspending and a drop in the price of oil eventually crippled the economy, which quickly began to spiral out of control.[626] By 2010, a socioeconomic and political crisis marked by hyperinflation, escalating starvation, disease and crime began. The problem became so severe that Chávez declared an "economic war" on 2 June 2010 due to the increasing shortages in the country.

After the death of Chávez in March 2013, his successor, Nicolás Maduro, was elected the next month as president.[627] Not surprisingly, Maduro continued most of the existing economic policies of his predecessor. Equally predictable, the economy continued to spin out of control and went into freefall. By 2014, Venezuela was in economic recession. Despite falling oil revenues the Government failed to cut spending, denied the economic crisis existed, and violently repressed any opposition and conducted extrajudicial killings.[628]

In December 2015, Maduro's opposition won a large majority of seats in National Assembly elections. However, this simply exacerbated the crisis as the executive and legislative branches quarrelled over alleged electoral fraud. This argument eventually led Venezuela's Supreme Court, an entity widely accepted as loyal to the Government, to disqualify three opposition legislators. This turn of events meant that the opposition alliance's two-thirds supermajority, which bestowed it with broad powers to intervene at the executive level, disappeared. The opposition railed against the decision and refused to accept the court decision. As a result, the court refused to recognize the legitimacy of the parliament. The impasse simply led to both sides adopting increasingly radical tactics to attain their objectives.

The Maduro government countered the growing protests by convening elections for a National Constituent Assembly, which would be responsible

for drafting a new constitution and restoring law and order. The creation of this new body, consisting of government loyalists, basically rendered the National Assembly powerless. In May 2018, Maduro was re-elected for another six-year term in an election that was largely boycotted by opposition parties citing a repressive Government campaign to kidnap, torture and kill opponents.[629]

Predictably, Maduro's re-election was not recognized by Venezuela's National Assembly and they argued that the presidency was vacant. This proclamation now allowed them, based on the constitution, to declare the leader of the National Assembly, Juan Guaidó, a member of the center-left Popular Will Party, as the acting president in January 2019. Subsequently, the U.S. and more than 50 other countries recognised Guaidó as the legitimate president.[630] However, Russia and China among others stood by President Maduro. Additionally, the Venezuelan security forces, who play a key role in the crisis, continued to be loyal to Maduro, who ensured that they received frequent pay increases, as well as key appointments of high-ranking officers.[631]

Adding to the chaos, aside from the COVID-19 pandemic, a low-intensity conflict was being waged along the 2,219 kilometre-long porous Venezuela-Colombian border, across which people, narcotics, and black market goods, particularly gasoline, food, and medicine are smuggled. Additionally, it has become the refuge of criminals and guerrillas. As a result, violence, kidnappings, forced recruitment by armed groups, and the disappearances of migrants fleeing Venezuela has dramatically increased.[632]

In entirety, as a result of the rampant poverty, crime, disease, starvation, corruption and government repression since 2014, approximately five million Venezuelans have fled the country.[633] The crisis in Venezuela has not been unnoticed in the U.S.

Venezuela and the U.S.

The U.S. established diplomatic relations with Venezuela in 1835. Historically, it has been Venezuela's largest trading partner. However, during the Chávez regime U.S.-Venezuelan bilateral relationship became gravely strained. PSUV policies to seize private property and restrict media freedom eroded democratic checks and balances. Moreover, Chávez's seeming cooperation with criminal and terrorist groups, as well as his cooperation with China, Russia, and Iran increased tensions.

The fraudulent re-election of Maduro in May 2018, only worsened the relationship. In essence, both Chávez and Maduro defined themselves and their party through their opposition and criticism of the U.S.[634]

Significantly, the U.S. gave tacit approval of a coup attempt against Chávez in April 2002. Quite simply, the George W. Bush Administration had prior knowledge of the opposition's plans and decided not to share this information with the Chávez regime. In the end, he was deposed for less than 48 hours, at which time overwhelming popular support and loyalists within the military assisted his return to power.[635]

Adding to the tension is the fact that since 2005, the U.S. Administration has assessed that Venezuela has "failed demonstrably" to adhere to its drug control obligations under international counter-narcotics agreements.[636] Between 2017 and 2019, the U.S. announced a wide range of sanctions against Venezuela and particular individuals. In March 2020, the U.S. suspended embassy operations in Caracas and now maintains formal diplomatic relations with Venezuela and the Guaidó government through its accredited ambassador to the U.S.[637]

In fact, since the January 2019 formal American recognition of the Guaidó Government, the U.S. has coordinated its efforts with the interim president of Venezuela. In essence, the American strategy has emphasized a diplomatic push to boost international support for Guaidó, enacted targeted sanctions and visa revocations to increase pressure on the Maduro administration, as well as authorizing broader sanctions on the state oil company and government. It has also provided, between the years 2017-2019, $472 million in humanitarian aid to countries sheltering Venezuelan refugees and a further $56 million for Venezuela itself.[638]

Furthermore, in late March 2020, U.S. prosecutors indicted Maduro and over a dozen current and former Venezuelan officials on charges of narco-terrorism and drug smuggling. The charges state that Maduro for years has attempted to flood the U.S. with cocaine in an attempt to weaken American society and bolster his position and wealth.[639] The U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, declared during a diplomatic tour through the region that President Maduro "has to leave."[640] In fact, the U.S. Justice Department put a $15-million bounty on Maduro's head for his role in overseeing massive drug trafficking into

the U.S.[641] The Trump administration has also previously considered military options to remove Maduro from power.[642]

In essence, the U.S. pressure has exacerbated the crisis in Venezuela. Its financial embargo and sanctions virtually cut Venezuela off from most financial markets. This action has resulted in increased economic hardship on the Venezuelan people and makes an economic recovery virtually impossible.[643] It has also opened the door for Russian and Iranian influence. For instance, the Russian state-owned oil company Rosneft has assisted Maduro in circumventing American sanctions by exporting as much as 70 percent of its oil through its subsidiaries.[644]

In the end, U.S. interest in Venezuela remains high. Firstly, the oil rich country offers rewards for those who succeed in gaining post-Maduro access to the oil fields and the markets during a recovery based economic bonanza. Secondly, a Maduro-free Venezuela would rid the region of a vocally anti-American actor and also excise the Russian and Iranian influence in the country. The question, however, is whether these motives are enough to warrant an active role in regime change?

The Seeds of a Plan

In February 2019, the billionaire Richard Branson hired Jordan Goudreau, a former U.S. Special Forces (USSF) medic who founded Silvercorp USA, a private security contractor the year previous, to provide security for a concert he sponsored on the Colombian side of the Venezuelan border in an attempt to pressure the Maduro government to allow humanitarian aid into the country. The opposition leader, Juan Guaidó, who had declared himself interim leader the month prior hoped that the concert and aid convoy would assist in his quest to take over the government. However, predictably, Maduro's security forces violently blocked the convoy from crossing the border.

Equally disappointing for Guaidó was an attempted insurrection in April 2019 that also amounted to nothing. He had tried to turn soldiers against Maduro but his efforts gained only a few hundred defectors. The plan was to push across the western border and seize the oil centre of Maracaibo and then force their way to the capital, Caracas. Failing in their bid, most fled to Colombia.

As a result, Guaidó and a select group of his supporters termed the "Presidential Commission," led by J.J. Rendón, a Venezuelan political strategist entrusted by Guaidó to assist in leading the secretive committee, now looked at other means of ousting Maduro. Rendón and the committee met with a handful of potential partners. However, these "contractors" demanded as much as $500 million to remove Maduro.[645]

Enter Goudreau and Silvercorp USA. Representatives of Guaidó's opposition party met with Goudreau in a Miami Biscayne Bay high-rise, on 7 September 2019, to listen to his pitch. Goudreau offered a more economical alternative. He pitched a self-financed plan with a retainer up front. However, his offer also included a $212.9 million payout once the job was done.[646] The money was to come from future exports of Venezuelan oil under a Guaidó Government.

Goudreau declared that he had 800 men ready to infiltrate into Venezuela and "extract" Maduro and his henchmen. A rough plan and timeline was hashed out. Goudreau would have 45 days to prepare his force, gather up the necessary equipment and do the required planning. Once ready, his force, broken up into several teams, would clandestinely infiltrate into Venezuela and form cells that would in turn move deeper into the country in preparation to seize key oil facilities and strategic infrastructure. Additionally, these teams would attack government security forces, as well as the pro-Maduro motorcycle gangs known as *colectivos*, as well as Colombian guerrilla groups operating on Venezuelan soil. With a tentative plan in place, on 16 October, Goudreau and Guaidó, signed an agreement, contingent on funding and other conditions.[647] As part of the agreement, Goudreau would get a $1.5 million retainer, and later collect over $200 million. Rendón later explained this was a "trial balloon," to test what Goudreau could actually do. The agreement text left no ambiguity on the objective: "An operation to capture/detain/remove Nicolás Maduro … remove the current Regime and install the recognized Venezuelan President Juan Guaidó."[648]

Soon after the signing, however, Rendón began to have doubts. He asserted that Goudreau began acting erratically and that he failed to show any evidence of financial backing that he claimed to have amassed to fund the operation. Moreover, Goudreau demanded immediate payment of a $1.5 million retainer, even though he failed to prove he had 800 men ready

to march. "He [Goudreau] became moody and disrespectful," Rendón disclosed. "Our last meeting on 8 November last year was very, very uncomfortable," he continued, "So I said, 'This is not going anywhere, I want you to leave my premises.'"[649] Nonetheless, Rendón paid out $50,000 for "expenses" in an effort to buy time. Goudreau had added pressure by sending a text that alleged, "Washington is fully aware of your direct participation in the project and I don't want them to lose faith." Nonetheless, the relationship apparently soured to such an extent after the heated argument that according to Rendón, he considered the operation dead.[650]

But, apparently, he was mistaken.

The Attempted Coup

In early May 2020, the Venezuelan military intercepted a group of rebels and American mercenaries. Eight of the insurgents were killed and a number captured. Significantly, two of the prisoners were former USSF soldiers. Not surprisingly, the Maduro government accused members of the Venezuelan opposition of conspiring with Silvercorp USA, to invade Venezuela and overthrow the government.

The drama began in the late spring of 2019. Many of the defectors from Maduro's security forces, as well as those in the failed April insurrection, were holed-up in a town known as a smuggler's haven close to the Venezuelan border. Here they met Goudreau, who speaking through a translator, explained the mission to liberate their homeland from the autocratic Maduro. He also spoke of his "connections with the U.S. high command."[651]

Goudreau was also working with a former Venezuelan major-general named Clíver Alcalá, who was introduced to Goudreau by a Venezuelan military officer who defected and was now part of the movement to oust Maduro.[652] Apparently, Alcalá told Goudreau that he had 300 soldiers at his disposal. But, much like Goudreau's 800, they didn't exist. Nonetheless, the forces they did have continually moved around the Colombian border region, bedding down in remote rural homes.

In June, Goudreau established the first training camp in the Colombian city of Maicao. One of the conspirators, Hernan Aleman, an exiled Venezuelan

parliamentarian, described, "We had men getting fit, gaining knowledge. But we had a lot of economic difficulties – sometimes we could only afford to provide two meals a day, not three." Aleman revealed, "We talked about the plan – a tactical operation to capture the big players in Venezuela who would be handed over to the United States. Juan Guaidó would assume the mandate as interim president, leading to free elections in Venezuela,"[653] Rendón divulged, "We researched around 22 scenarios... maybe a third of them involved the use of force." He added, "We didn't talk with any other military contractors [except Silvercorp], but we reviewed them big time, sure. We even reviewed the Foreign Legion."[654]

For his part, Goudreau asserted that he would arrange the finances. He convinced the conspirators that he had backers who were willing to invest in the military operation based on the premise, if not agreement, that they would reap economic rewards under a Guaidó administration. The agreement raised morale in the ranks of the Venezuelan opposition. However, the elation did not last long. Goudreau demanded the $1.5 million retainer but failed to show any evidence of the financial backing or his 800 foot soldiers. Therefore, Rendón refused to pay. According to Guaidó's presidential commission, the agreement was now null and void.

This state of affairs was not seemingly known by Goudreau and those in his three Colombian training camps. As far as they were concerned Operation Gideon was full throttle forward. In fact, in January 2020, two former USSF soldiers, Luke Denman and Airan Berry, recruited by Goudreau, arrived in Colombia to assist with the operation.[655] Three months later little had changed. There was still no money. Moreover, a number of Venezuelans deserted.

The situation worsened. On 23 March, Colombian authorities intercepted a truck full of military equipment, including assault rifles near the northern city of Barranquilla.[656] Three days later the U.S. Department of Justice indicted Alcalá on narco-terrorism charges. Moreover, they placed a $10 million bounty on his head.[657] A number of sources claimed that the American and Colombian authorities eventually became leery of the training camps and hoped that the removal of former Major-General Alcalá would lead to the disbandment of the camps and operation. However, with the removal of Alcalá, Captain Antonio Sequea took command.

Then, on 28 March events spiraled. Maduro's second-in-command revealed in a television broadcast that the Venezuelan authorities had a comprehensive knowledge of the training camps in Colombia, including the names of the Americans involved. Clearly, the operation seemed to be compromised beyond saving. However, the rebels in the camps had changed location by this time to a remote part of coastal Guajira by the Venezuelan border. Although Sequea was aware of the compromise he assured his American backers that he still had matters under control. Moreover, Goudreau, in Miami, who was in contact with the Americans in the training camps continued to emphasize that more American veterans would be deployed to reinforce the rebels.

Staggeringly, planning for the invasion continued. The plan was for the rebel force to make amphibious landings on the coast of Venezuela and then regroup for several days in safe houses before covertly infiltrating Caracas. Once in the capital city they would conduct reconnaissance and make final preparations prior to assaulting the presidential Palace of Miraflores, military jails to release detainees, and the headquarters of Venezuela's Intelligence Service. The overall objective was to seize Maduro and his close associates.

Reality diverged drastically from the theory. The execution went staggeringly wrong. At 1800 hours, on 1 May 2020, a boat with 11 men and eight rifles left Colombia for Venezuela. Minutes later a second vessel, with 47 rebels and only two rifles departed. It developed engine problems less than one hour from commencing and those aboard suffered seasickness in the heavy seas.

Meanwhile, in the early hours of 3 May, in the coastal town of Macuto, which was 32 kilometres north of Caracas, Maduro's security forces were patiently waiting for the smaller craft. Once it landed the eight rebels were quickly killed or captured. The second boat, which had fallen behind and was now low on fuel dropped the insurgents on land so that they could try to escape and evade the security dragnet. Captain Sequea and the two Americans remained on board and were soon captured. In total, Maduro's forces killed eight and captured 37.[658]

Astonishingly, on 3 May as the rebel force was killed and captured without a fight, Goudreau broadcast in a video, "A daring amphibious raid was launched from the border of Colombia. Our men are continuing to fight right now... Our units have been activated in the south, west and east of Venezuela."[659] Hours

after recording the video and once it was clear that the raid had been an utter disaster, Goudreau went on the digital American TV station, *Factores de Poder*, and divulged details of the agreement he made with Guaidó presidential commission, insisting that the deal was still valid, underlining that Guaidó himself had signed it.

Not to be outdone, within hours of the Operation Gideon failure, Venezuela's opposition declared the attack was "false-flag" operation, in essence a propaganda ploy conducted by Maduro's government. The allegation failed to gain traction with any audience.

External Involvement?

Venezuelan leader, Nicolás Maduro, had long warned his supporters that the Americans would try to remove him. "We don't want to go back to the gringo interventions of the 20th century," he declared, adding, "The U.S. is trying to mount a coup and install a puppet government [to protect] its interests in Venezuela."[660] By March 2020, Maduro loudly and publicly accused external forces of orchestrating a plot against him from Colombian soil.[661]

Juan Guaidó, the Venezuelan opposition leader, denied any involvement in the scotched coup attempt although several of his advisors resigned over their links to the "mercenaries."[662] Much like Guaidó's claims of non-involvement, Colombia's Foreign Ministry also strongly denied any involvement in the "mercenary operation" in response to Maduro's accusations that Colombia's president, Ivan Duque, was complicit in the plot. The Foreign Ministry quickly framed the attack on Colombia as accusations meant "to hide the real problems the Venezuelan people face, following a usual strategy from this illegitimate regime to look for distractions abroad in times of domestic crisis."[663]

The denials are to be expected. With strategic sabotage, most often, the intentions are meant to be clandestine. And although there is no "smoking gun" to clearly implicate external governments, there is plenty of circumstantial evidence to prevent a full exoneration. First, Goudreau produced a secret tape recording of Guaidó agreeing to the contract. Second, another recording from spring 2019, "captures Venezuelan opposition operatives discussing Colombian government resistance to any cooperation with Alcalá

and objections from former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe."[664] In fact, one senior Venezuelan opposition official conceded that the Alcalá-Goudreau plan was "the worst-kept secret in Venezuela."[665] And then, there were the three abandoned Colombian light combat vessels that Venezuelan soldiers seized while patrolling the Orinoco River, several days after the failed invasion. The Colombian Navy, however, insisted the boats were dragged away by strong river currents.[666]

Allegations of American involvement are similarly muddied. Goudreau (and Silvercorp USA) based in Florida, openly stated his mercenaries were working on the ground in Venezuela to remove Maduro. Moreover, speaking in Florida in February 2019, President Donald Trump cautioned members of Maduro's security forces who continued to support Maduro that they "will find no safe harbor, no easy exit and no way out." He added, "You will lose everything." He stated the administration wanted "a peaceful transition of power, but all options are open."[667]

Moreover, former national security advisor John Bolton in his recently published book, *The Room Where it Happened*, clearly blames the Trump Administration for the failed coup. Bolton quotes the President as lamenting, "This is the fifth time I've asked for it [removal of Maduro]." Moreover, Bolton insists that Trump assured Guaidó that he would "pull off Maduro's overthrow."[668]

Nonetheless, the U.S. also denied involvement. Although President Trump floated a "military option" for Venezuela from his golf course in New Jersey, in late August 2019, and his then-Secretary of State, Rex Tillerman also spoke favourably of a possible military option to remove Maduro, President Trump and other U.S. officials have denied knowledge of, or any involvement in, the failed operation. In fact, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo firmly stated that "there was no United States government direct involvement."[669]

So, who is truly complicit? The answer may never be definitively known. After all, the entire concept of strategic sabotage is to achieve the national interest/objectives without the target country(s) actually knowing the identity of the actual protagonist.[670]

CHAPTER 14

FROM THE KREMLIN TO THE KLAN: RUSSIAN NESTING DOLLS OF RIGHT-WING HATE

Dr. Robert Martyn

NOTE: The research and majority of the writing for this chapter occurred before the divisive turbulence surrounding the 2020 Presidential election. The final writing, however, overlaps the ongoing election result protests, including the storming of the Capitol building, but precedes the inauguration. As such, some observations may be overtaken by events. The often-misattributed curse, "may you live in interesting times," is proving to be ominous.

North America has habitually remained in blissful ignorance of Right-Wing Extremism (RWE) as the 9/11 attack and subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan focused attention upon a Salafist Jihadi threat. Far-right supporters saw the presence of Islam as a political, demographic, economic and cultural threat to Western civilization. Yet, the results are often seen as a frequent binary of an Islamist "national security threat" versus a mere "public order threat" posed by RWE.[671] Importantly, failure to seriously address RWE sends a dangerous message of tolerance, if not encouragement.

Changing perceptions began to accelerate about five years ago, as mainstream politics increasingly embraced far-right rhetoric, elevating once-fringe elements of the Right and leading conservative ideology on issues like foreign policy, immigration, and trade. However, this is not a stand-alone domestic problem. There is the increasingly active role of foreign governments in generating violent white supremacist ideology. As former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Supervisory Special Agent Ali Soufan testified before the

House Committee on Homeland Security, "the emerging epicenter [of white supremacist extremism] seems to be located in Russia and Ukraine."[672]

Russia seeks to influence the West's elections and undermine its social cohesion in order to contrast the resulting chaos with the stability it seeks to foster at home, weakening the appeal of Western democracy. In meeting its objectives, Moscow employs public Kremlin politics, covert state Intelligence branches, regime-linked oligarchs, and state-tolerated right-wing groups within Russia. Moscow encourages white-supremacist groups, making them stronger and more dangerous. Such support deepens social and political divisions, which increases violence in democratic countries.

This chapter will show extensive ties between the Russian government and far-right groups, with Russian propaganda efforts in particular fuelling divisive anti-immigrant and anti-government sentiment. So how is Russia actively influencing North American RWE? Key efforts focus upon training, financing, and various forms of disinformation. After a quick survey of the state of RWE and Russia's rationale for their actions, this chapter will look at these specific activities.

The Growth of Right-Wing Extremism

That the far-right poses a salient terrorist threat is no longer up for debate. A February 2017 Southern Poverty Law Center report identified nearly 200 active white nationalist and neo-Nazi groups in the U.S.[673] In Canada, between 2015 and 2018, the number of groups is getting close to 300.[674] While the number is larger, the membership in each is much smaller than the U.S. equivalent, and that number includes multiple chapters of the same umbrella group. Current assessments by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), FBI, and Canada's Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) all note a surge in violent RWE in recent years.[675] In the five years preceding 2020, racially and ethnically motivated attacks have killed 203 people within America, with right-wing extremists responsible for 90 percent of extremist-related killings in 2019.

The diverse array of ideologies often over-lap, to the point that it can be difficult to classify the identity of perpetrators in a straightforward manner. Such diversity is due in large measure to splintering of the far-right extremist

movement over the past few years. It now presents a "more disparate, amorphous and, arguably, dangerous threat than before."[676]

The ongoing wave of far-right violence features ideological convergence – what has been academically termed "fringe fluidity," and a senior FBI official has described as "salad bar" ideologies.[677] These terms describe the blending of different extremist ideologies, such as fascists claiming environmental degradation concerns, the far-left and -right coming together to protest police violence. In fact, it includes even anti-Muslim neo-Nazis worshipping Jihadist icons such as Osama Bin Laden. Such ideological convergence provides problematic challenges, weakening counterterrorism efforts. The inability to define an adversary's ideology, grievances, or identify potential recruits makes it extremely difficult to provide intelligence warnings and prepare countermeasures.

In addition to violent deeds, the far-right rely heavily upon symbolic narratives of a mythical past seen as enduring, secure, and safe. Use of crusader symbolism also justifies violence as a religious duty.[678] One Russian brand t-shirt, for example, depicts a Christian Crusader stabbing a Muslim victim with the accompanying text "just like back in 1099 a Teutonic Crusaders kicking in mercilessly and straight into the throats of our enemies." (sic)[679] Nostalgia for such an imagined past urges electoral rhetoric promising a restored, utopian future while scapegoating those purportedly to blame for the loss of this model past; where elites, Muslims, immigrants seem irrelevant. Increasingly feminists are included, as a gendered nationalism and toxic masculinity infuses far-right politics.[680] While RWE has previously had limited electoral success, it is bringing increased intolerance into political discourse, pushing mainstream politicians to imitate them, providing a credibility that aids in recruiting and fund-raising.[681]

Assisting in the growth of RWE is how the less-radicalized version of conservativism has been embraced by a growing percentage of the population. A sitting President calling upon a militant far-right group to "stand by" failed to elicit much outcry. It also gave the group exposure and standing, which resulted in a surge of new members.[682] We are not just seeing several factions energized, we are also seeing them unusually vocal, and in some cases, fearlessly public in threatening of violence. Looking at Twitter alone, between

2012 and 2016, the usage of neo-Nazi rhetoric, including violent coercion, increase by 600 percent.[683]

The recent U.S. presidential election accelerated the fissure in the right-wing information environment, forcing mainstream media, social media, and individual pundits to choose between upholding the real world or indulging those insisting on their own narrative despite the absence of facts. As the crevice expands, the information content is becoming drastically siloed, made shoddier by the degradation of critically supported political journalism. A Pew research poll showed that "CNN is the only one of three leading networks to broadcast more reporting than opinion and commentary."[684] Right-leaning Fox and left-leaning MSNBC programming are habitually below 50 percent factual news. Those limiting their information intake to right-wing echo chambers like One America News Network, Newsmax, and Parler cannot help but grow even more extreme upon being fed a steady diet of demonstrably false conspiracy-mongering.[685]

Adding to the conspiracies and self-mythologies, RWE thrives on publications such as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and *The Turner Diaries*. *The Protocols* was thoroughly exposed as fraudulent, having been fabricated by Russian intelligence in 1903. *The Turner Diaries* is nothing more than a racist fantasy novel, written by American Nazi party member William Luther Pierce. This book has been labeled the "bible of the racist right" by the FBI.[686] Bigoted, conspiracy-nourished disconnects from reality and adherence to such ideological 'guidebooks' make increased political violence almost inevitable.

Timothy McVeigh, for example, became infamous for his 1995 bombing of an Oklahoma federal building, killing 168 people. Although not considered a member of any group, he adhered to the attitudes of the wider RWE movement, having drawn tactical insights from a similar bombing in *The Turner Diaries*. In the United Kingdom (UK), a series of 1999 nail bomb attacks on minority areas of London led the perpetrator, David Copeland, to admit that he was inspired by *The Turner Diaries*. He received six life sentences.[687] The book also features a group of white supremacists attacking the Capitol in an effort to overthrow the U.S. government. As the book's narrator writes in his diary, "The real value of all our attacks today lies in the psychological impact, not the immediate casualties. They learned this afternoon that not one of them is beyond our

reach." It also features a mass hanging called "the Day of the Rope," which was mimicked disturbingly as those who attacked the Capitol erected gallows, with several carrying police- or military-grade flex cuffs to detain prisoners.[688]

So how does Russia play out in this scenario? There is a broad trend of mutual affection between Western white supremacists and the Russian government. Dating back to 2004, Ku Klux Klan (KKK) leader David Duke characterized Russia as the "key to white survival," and American white supremacist Richard Spencer admires Russian President Vladimir Putin, having identified Russia as the "sole white power in the world."[689] Both Jared Taylor, founder of the white supremacist American Renaissance, and Unite the Right organizer Matthew Heimbach, have met with ultranationalist Russian political leaders in 2015 and 2017, respectively.[690] We will return to Heimbach momentarily. For the Far Right, Russia is portrayed as a model of masculine, Christian traditional values, in contrast to deemed-evil globalists, and multicultural elites. Russia, the narrative goes, values its sovereignty and traditional culture and morals, with a particular hostility toward the LGBTQ community.[691]

Russian Intent

The continued growth of the NATO alliance membership from the original 12 in 1949 to today's 30 has all but eliminated Russia's historical sphere of influence. It is a seriously contentious issue for them. Putin and his advisors have convinced themselves that this expansion, coupled with deteriorating political relations mean that the West is waging a war against Russia. This feeling was exacerbated by their 2008 invasion of Georgia; while a clear military victory, it was an information operation disaster with Russia being seen as an aggressor against a much weaker state. This message was widely accepted, causing Putin himself to note the "power of the West's propaganda machine."[692] The conflict brought additional economic sanctions from the U.S., European Union (EU), and much of the West, further reinforcing the view that U.S.-led persecution of Russia is an intentional and organized effort.

Learning nothing from the Georgia misadventure, Russia invaded Ukraine and annexed the Crimea. Putin's former-senior economic advisor, Andrei Illarionov, has called Ukraine "an introductory chapter" in "the Fourth World War," saying the term is used "by the Kremlin propaganda machine" for a war "being waged

now by Russia against the rest of the world."[693] However, it took the weaponization of information in the 2016 U.S. presidential election for the Western world to start noticing Kremlin adventurism against North America. Many do not yet understand that Russia is viewing this as an existential conflict, wherein Moscow has set for itself "the goal of destroying the West in its current version as a civilization."[694] Putin was not alone in this assessment. Three key individuals informed the Russian response: political philosopher Aleksandr Dugin, Chief of the Russian General Staff General Valery Gerasimov, and populist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky.

Dugin is the main architect of the neo-Russian imperialism called Eurasianism, through which he seeks to derail this U.S.-led, revised containment program. In a series of lectures, articles, and books, Dugin has sought to "rehabilitate fascism in Russia."[695] Dugin sees Eurasianism in geographic terms, wherein historical conflict occurs between more liberal maritime alliances against the conservative, land-based Eurasian societies. He has maintained close ties with the aforementioned white nationalists Richard Spencer and David Duke. If the stakes weren't so high, one could be amused at the almost ideological lockstep with dystopian states of Oceana and Eurasia from George Orwell's *1984*.[696]

In 2013, Chief of the General Staff, General Gerasimov, developed a new theory of what he described as nonlinear war based on the belief that the recent "colour revolutions" and the Arab Spring were employed by the United States to achieve its anti-Russian foreign policy objectives.[697] Gerasimov wrote that the "role of nonmilitary means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness."[698] Through the widespread use of political, informational, and other non-military measures "implemented with the use of the protest potential of the population," the goal is to plunge the West "into the abyss of chaos."[699] While Gerasimov complements Dugin's beliefs, Gerasimov is speaking more directly to the military sphere. However, if you delete the military specific aspects, what remains provides a striking pointer to Russian operations against North America – a campaign of chaotic subversion and division, intended to distract, divide, and demoralize.

The third key ideologue was Russian politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky who produced a program that was both ultranationalist and imperialist. He had

success in establishing relationships with some of the more radical European right-wing personalities, particularly France's Jean-Marie Le Pen. To garner German support, he offered to restore the 1937 boundaries, returning East Prussia. His major political work, *Last Dash to The South* (1993) should "restore the empire and, to prevent instability presumably spreading from the southern countries to Russia, make the 'dash to the south' occupying and incorporating Turkey, Afghanistan, and Iran into Russia."[700] Zhirinovsky once stated that he dreamt of a time "when Russian soldiers could wash their boots in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean."[701] His initial North American connection was convicted Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel, who having been arrested in the U.S. for violating immigration rules, was deported to Canada, where he was held until being returned to Germany for trial. Now understanding why Russia feels as it does, it is important to examine the three key methods it uses to meet its aim – Training; Financing; and Active Measures and Disinformation.

Training

The Russian Imperial Movement (RIM) is key to facilitating Russian training of RWE globally. Although their website has been inaccessible during the latter research and writing of this chapter, by its own account, it is a monarchist, orthodox-patriotic, right-wing conservative organization fighting for white supremacy. In 2014, RIM began training volunteers to fight alongside its paramilitary wing, Imperial Legion, in eastern Ukraine, although the group has since expanded its operations to include global ambitions. According to the group's spokesperson, RIM seeks to "continue to establish contacts with right-wing, traditionalist and conservative organizations around the world" in order "to share the experience of political [and] information warfare and joint squad tactics training."[702]

While the Kremlin is not directly connected to RIM, their paramilitary activities are accepted, allowing the organization to form alliances with extremists across Europe and North America, exacerbating democratic destabilization. RIM nonetheless worked in conjunction with the Russian political party Rodina to convene the World National-Conservative Movement (WNCM), a conference organized against the principles of liberalism, multiculturalism, and tolerance. Beyond mere ideological exchanges WNCM's organizers worked to establish "joint camps for military and athletic instruction."[703]

Through its paramilitary arm, RIM carries out military-style training sessions known as "Partizan," near St. Petersburg. There is no attempt made to hide its training operations, publicizing details on their official VKontakte (VK) pages, the Russia's version of Facebook, which has more than 30,000 followers, thus attracting foreign participants. The courses run for one to two weeks, training groups of between 10 and 15 men at a time, with former Russian military members conducting training on bomb-making, marksmanship, combat medicine, and small-group tactics such as assaulting and clearing buildings.[704] The most prominent result to date was the bombing of a refugee center in Gothenburg, Sweden by two Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM) graduates.[705] The U.S. government listed NRM as a terrorist threat group in 2018.

The aforementioned Mathew Heimbach was leader of the neo-Nazi Traditionalist Worker Party (TWP), which advocated for racially purity and calling for the break-up the United States, explicitly pointing to the precedent of the Soviet Union.[706] At the Party launch, he virtually hosted Dugin, whose presence was denied due to the U.S. sanctions. He continues to globalize his efforts through multiple European networking visits. In 2017, RIM representative Stanislav Shevchuk met with Heimbach in both Washington and at the Gettysburg battlefield for photo ops and discussions of mutual support, including having TWP be the U.S. representative at future RIM gatherings. Heimbach was intimately involved in the August 2017 Unite the Right protest in Charlottesville, which in addition to protesters shouting, "Russia is our friend," saw a vehicle attack by a white supremacist that killed one and injured at least 30 others.[707] He was also photographed at the 2021 Capitol Building insurrection.

Indirectly related to these training developments is the broader phenomenon of foreign fighters from the wider violent RWE movement traveling to gain combat experience fighting in Ukraine. Research supported by the Counter Extremism Project (CEP) showed that around 1000 Westerners have taken part in the fighting, on both sides, thus far.

Financing

Tracking financing in aiding counterterrorism gained prominence after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, although its utility was evident in both the Northern Ireland "troubles" and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Today's extremist environment is increasingly disparate in terms of the organizational levels, ranging

from extremist movements to groups to cells and individuals with nebulous associations. This incongruence presents challenges, as many contemporary counterterrorism tools were designed with larger, coherent extremist groups in mind.

Criminalization of financing enables law enforcement to investigate and prosecute individuals involved in raising and transferring funds for extremist groups, but simply 'following the money' to stop the flow of funds is only one aspect of counterterrorism financial intelligence. A secondary objective is to exploit collection analysis to facilitate other counterterrorism investigations and charges, including exposing capabilities and preparatory steps of impending terrorist activity, and illuminating terrorist networks. The amount of money involved in most of these activities is far less important than the relationships and influence that it reveals.[708]

Financial support for RWE is the most opaque of Russia's activities. There is some evidence of Russian fiscal support for right-wing politics, both extremist and mainstream across Europe. While not covert, for example, Russian involvement with European internal politics raised red flags after French political leader Marine Le Pen obtained $11.1 million from a Moscow-based bank. This incident was seen as a repeat of the 1990s Moscow funding of trade unions and political groups in the West, seeking to buy influence and destabilize opponents.[709] For more extremist elements, Russian leadership appears to prefer to work through proxies, such as Ukrainian oligarch Konstantin Malofeyev and his notorious financial support for various pro-Russian projects.[710] It has proven difficult to confirm similar activities within North America, with the notable exception of the aforementioned Matthew Heimbach. A former-FBI agent declared that Heimbach's several meetings with RIM representatives reportedly included discussions of funding.[711]

The U.S. Department of State's recent designation of RIM as a terrorist organization is an extraordinary step, allowing for monitoring of their activities and those who associate with it. Additionally, the designation gives prosecutors additional leverage in applying civil and criminal penalties to RIM and its associates. It authorizes the Treasury Department to designate RIM individuals as terror-supporters, as well as freezing of RIM's assets in the United States. This designation also means RIM's leadership and supporters

may be denied entry into the United States. Finally, the government may influence social media and technology companies to take down any hateful and violent social media content.[712] Note that there are distinctions between the "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" (SDGT) designation, under which RIM is listed, and the "Foreign Terrorist Organization" (FTO) classification, in that an FTO designation provides additional options to the Justice Department, particularly regarding material support charges against U.S. citizens.

Active Measures and Disinformation

Russia's current economic problems, exacerbated by international sanctions make the Kremlin more, not less, likely to engage in adventurism against North America. The means include espionage and cyber-attacks, but for this section we are most concerned with disinformation and propaganda. Russian undertakings in this sphere, enhancing Russian domestic and foreign policy goals, is the key support provided to North American RWE.

As background, in Russian parlance "intelligence activity" is covered by a two-part definition. The first part, the procurement and processing of information, are standard intelligence functions. The second characteristic is the less specific state-directed support measures ensuring the Russian Federation's security. This aspect is the original source of the abbreviation MS (*meropriyatiya sodeistviya* in Russian, or 'support measures'). In other words, this is an integral activity in accordance with Russian legislation and in keeping with their long-standing view of intelligence as a "secret form of political struggle."[713] This second facet traces its lineage directly from the Cold War Soviet Union. The Soviet strategy of maskirovka, or military deception, involved misleading enemies regarding military tactics, timing, and technology. Such information warfare is tied to the concept of reflexive control, defined as conveying to an opponent "specially prepared information to incline him to voluntarily make the predetermined decision desired by the initiator of the action."[714]

There are two particular types of disinformation, the goal of which is to create division by putting emotion over analysis and division over unity. The first is Identity Grievance disinformation campaigns, which exploits wrongs or low institutional trust, to push a false narrative. The messages spread quickly

because the disinformation conforms to readers' already-held beliefs. Second is Information Gaslighting, intended to overwhelm people with a flood of disinformation to cause uncertainty and distraction. These create an illusion that a great deal of people support the disinformation and can cause a sense of hopelessness as recipients question their perception of reality and perhaps even their sanity.[715]

Regarding activities in America, these pursuits are not new. In 1931, nine black males were arrested and tried for the fabricated accusation of raping two white women. With a lynch mob surrounding the Scottsboro Alabama courthouse, they were summarily found guilty, with eight sentenced to death (the youngest, a 13-year-old, sentenced to life imprisonment). The Soviet Union organized a campaign in which these men became the subject of all manner of propaganda, such as pamphlets, rallies, and news articles, which played upon the inequality and divisiveness of U.S. society.[716] The protests these measures inspired, compelled the Alabama Supreme Court to intervene.

These efforts continued throughout the Cold War. Richard Helms, Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), testified before the U.S. Senate in 1961, that Soviet document fraud was well known to consist of "the false news article, the forgery, the fabricated intelligence report, the distortion of a genuine document, and the false or true account attributed to a nonexistent organization."[717] However, Soviet operations evolved such that rather than false-flag or completely erroneous information, the propaganda increasingly disseminated actual U.S. news reports on controversial issues.[718] American efforts to counter the USSR's narrative about domestic racism were thus weakened.

So successful has this methodology become that Russia established an Internet Research Agency (IRA) specifically to create and disseminate propaganda. IRA social media accounts continue with this same approach of highlighting reputable U.S. news sources, such as *The Washington Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *The Hill*, which are featured amongst their top account sources.[719] They have simply upped their game to exploit telecommunications and social media. Indeed, Russia's influence upon the 2016 U.S. presidential election, regardless of the extent to which it swayed the outcome, continues to have a strong psychological impact on American voters.

The Russian IRA was the key player in that online disinformation campaign, which stressed existing social conflicts to affect electoral behaviour. The IRA's most successful social media account to date had been "Tennessee GOP," which had just under 36,000 followers before being taken down.[720]

In creating their propaganda, Russia sees the necessity of involving westerners, noting that "the most promising in this regard is the 'new right'." The benefits are the groups that are pro-Russian, have views that are already politically aligned, and their discourse is western in origin and linked to contemporary crises and can thus, can be readily "transformed into a narrative convenient for us, a constant retelling, which will constitute the unity of the network and guide its activity is in the direction we need."[721] The IRA operation is therefore largely opportunistic real-time chatter, amplifying a myriad of conspiracy theories that their audience is predisposed to accept, with Twitter providing the greatest breadth and repetition of these narratives.[722] Thousands of such tweets were advanced or amplified by the IRA's right-wing personas.

However, it appears to have taken mosque shootings in New Zealand and Canada, plus the violent U.S. Charlottesville riots, to get social media companies to act. While social media can block Russian disinformation and radical linkages, they have been loath to inhibit extreme right-wing accounts due to bonds with mainstream Western politicians who would be expected to condemn supposed censorship.[723] In September 2020, Facebook removed approximately 300 sites attributed to the Russian military, including the GRU (*Glavnoye razvedyvatel'noye upravleniye*), the Main Intelligence Directorate.[724]

Several other social media platforms followed suit, a move repeated extensively after the 2021 Capitol Building assault. As a result, some extremist groups are getting pushed to the margins of the internet. Many North American neo-Nazi groups, took to VKontakte, effectively turning VK into a social media safe haven for an ever-greater number of white nationalists seeking to communicate with one another and get their messages out.[725] The other growing alternative site for RWE is the American Parler network, which claims to be an unbiased social media site for free expression without censorship. At the time of writing, following the Capitol Building storming, Parler is also facing difficulties.

Regardless of the IRA's actual effect on the election, Moscow successfully challenged the legitimacy of the U.S. election, which degrades the coherence of U.S. strategic decision making.[726] As defected Czech intelligence officer, Ladislav Bittman, testified before the U.S. Senate, one of the reasons disinformation campaigns are successful is because the recipient, whether politician, journalist, or regular citizen, want to believe the message; it reaffirms their pre-existing opinion.[727] The significant political controversy generated supports the Russian aim of spreading divisiveness and chaos.

In addition to these social media efforts, Russian news media contributes overtly, playing up migrant crime and other white-nationalist hot-button issues. The news program "Russia Today" was established in 2005, being rebranded "RT" in 2009, in order to appear less connected to the government. Its mandate, in Putin's own words, was to break the "Anglo-Saxon monopoly on the global information streams."[728] That same year, its content shifted to "more deliberate provocations and conspiracy theories... under the heading "Question more – an appeal to Western audiences to question the credibility of their national mainstream political leaders."[729]

RT regularly hosts far-right commentators, helping to infiltrate their ideas into the mainstream. These commentators have included Holocaust deniers, members of the U.S.-based Christian Patriot movement who reject federal authority, American far-right leaders such as Richard Spencer and other voices once confined to the information wilderness.[730] Former American RT journalist Liz Wahl noted their hiring preference for those with anti-establishment and anti-Western views... "the more willing you are to twist the truth and spread conspiracy theories, the more likely you are to get a show on RT."[731]

Conclusion

Referring to Russian destabilization efforts, U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (Democrat-Connecticut) warned NATO to be "constantly vigilant about the very quiet things that the Russians are doing that could ultimately lead to a traditional military confrontation." Russian support, such as for "fight clubs and biker clubs" within the Baltic States, are "just there waiting for some kind of domestic instability to allow for an opportunity to do in a NATO country what the Russians have successfully done inside Donetsk and Luhansk provinces in

Ukraine."[732] Further south, Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, one of Ukraine's vice prime ministers, conceded that "Ukraine has become, unfortunately, a lab for the Russian Federation to work on its instruments that it then later on is using in other countries," effectively reaffirming Senator Murphy's dire warnings.[733]

Have no doubt that for the Russians this is a "whole of government" effort. While this chapter focused upon the key aspects of Russian influence, they go well beyond the items covered here, including arcane aspects such as establishing fight clubs in order to attract violent young men and spread Russian influence. The Kremlin uses sports solidarity as a pretext for sending in undercover intelligence officers to build further links to sports hooligans being radicalized and stirring up far-right fervour; one leader self-declared his fellow thugs to be "foot soldiers of Putin."[734] A further effort is seen in the pro-Putin, Russian Orthodox motorcycle gang "Night Wolves," which purportedly has thousands of members. They coordinate with Russian military intelligence and continue efforts to establish a destabilizing presence in Poland, where U.S. troops are located, and has an active chapter in Latvia near deployed Canadian troops. Both the U.S. and Canada have imposed travel and/or economic sanctions against the Night Wolves and its leadership.[735] These are, however, of less significance and space precludes more in-depth discussion.

An ongoing problem in countering these Russian efforts is identifying the various strands. Any administration that "cherry-picks" the information it wishes to receive is dangerous and distorts the threats' true reality, thus making its citizens less safe. It further emboldens malign actors such as Russia to ramp up influence operations, particularly as the Kremlin becomes more confident that the government will dismiss continued Russian attempts to sow division among its citizens.[736] As Elain Duke, Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security, acknowledged, "the truth is the government doesn't have great credibility" – for many within the extremist realm, the government IS the problem.[737] Russia is more than happy to exploit this divide.

This threat remains a problem across North America. Canada has traditionally been ill-disposed to the kind of cultural chauvinism expressed south of the border. This perspective is due predominantly to Canada's unique multiculturalism policy, based upon a combination of selective immigration,

wide-ranging integration, and strong state efforts to quash dissent on these policies.[738] As noted by the security reports at the beginning though, this appears to be changing. Fascist style of politics is not always explicit; it is something that develops a creeping rootstalk at a subterranean level before blooming. Have no doubt, the seeds have been planted. While Russia did not start right-wing extremism within North America, it is happy to nurture this garden of hate.

There are four key take-aways. First, Russia feeds into conspiracies that undermine democratic institutions and their supporting sources of knowledge. Secondly, Russian reaffirms the key enemies proclaimed by RWE, be they liberals, academics, or multiculturalists. This outlook helps polarize, which creates a sense of threat. Thirdly, their disinformation taps into imaginary beliefs about sacred places and heroic action, layering them onto an exclusive far-right ideology. Finally, they inspire violence by mobilizing individuals who believe it is their moral imperative to act; by reducing empathy for others, you are free to loathe and strike.[739] Russia is an adversary seeking to destroy the U.S.-led international order and replace it with a much more chaotic world that favours the strong and the bold using a wide array of relatively low-cost disruptive techniques. Russia's relative weaknesses in national wealth and power and in conventional military strength is irrelevant. If the West does not soon understand this real threat, the cost of reversing Putin's gains and the danger it poses will rapidly grow.

POST-SCRIPT: Domestically, the imagery from the Capitol is already serving as a critical propaganda and recruitment tool for violent far-right extremists, neo-Nazis, and anti-government groups. The insurrection undermines U.S. efforts to promote democracy and civil society abroad and undercuts U.S. influence with allies. Within Russia, the mayhem in Washington was cause for gloating: "America no longer charts the course, and therefore has lost all right to set it," as the U.S. "certainly cannot now impose its electoral standards on other countries and claim to be the world's 'beacon of democracy'."[740] *Interesting times indeed.*

CHAPTER 15

SO WHAT? MAKING SENSE OF IT ALL

Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn, Dr. James D. Kiras,
and Dr. Emily Spencer

Sabotage – the act of deliberately destroying, damaging, or obstructing an opponent's equipment, material, systems, infrastructure, credibility, access, etc., especially for political or military advantage – is a timeless tool. In wartime there is no need to hide such actions, unless of course it is for reasons of secrecy prior to the act in order to increase its chances of success. In periods of perceived peace, however, or perhaps more accurately stated as periods of global inter-state strategic competition for access and influence, sabotage by state and non-state entities capable of interfering with other state actors' abilities to achieve national objectives, requires more finessing. In fact, strategic sabotage, defined for the purposes of this volume as destructive or obstructive military, paramilitary, economic, informational and/or political actions carried out by a nation's agent or proxy (or other non-state entity) to hinder an opponent's political/policy objective(s) or to further one's own, becomes an important tool to achieve one's objectives. To be truly considered "strategic" the action must impact, or at a minimum attempt to impact, the policy objectives of the instigating state or entity and/or the target state or entity. For example, regime change meets that criteria, as does the repeated attempts to derail the Iranian nuclear weapons ambitions by assassinating key personnel/scientists and sabotaging software, hardware and infrastructure.

In the era of Great Power Competition attribution becomes a concern as it has the potential to escalate competition into conflict. Despite the advantages of using strategic sabotage to derail a competitor's efforts and thereby potentially advance your own, care must be taken not to trigger the trip-wire of "hot" conflict.[741] As such, the evolution of strategic sabotage has advanced from overt wartime sabotage, to the, at times, clumsy meddling of the Cold

War, to the clandestine interference through misinformation, proxy force and cyber, covert actions in the current era of Great Power Competition.

This volume has examined a number of case studies regarding strategic sabotage, some successful and some not, from World War II to the present. These case studies merely scratch the surface in terms of available anecdotes. Nonetheless, they do provide a breadth of examples from which observations and themes can be drawn. Indeed, the limited explorations in this volume suggest strategic sabotage is a topic worthy of further consideration, discussion and research. From the case study explorations, the following interpretations are offered and can be grouped into national-level requirements and operational requirements and attributes.

National-level Requirements

NATIONAL INTEREST

Clearly national interest (or for non-state actors, entity objectives) drive motivation, commitment and decision-making. Regardless of agreements, alliances and personal relationships, it is ultimately national interest that will drive decisions on when and how to leverage strategic sabotage. As mid-eighteenth century British Prime Minister Henry John Temple Palmerston asserted, "Nations have no permanent friends or allies, they only have permanent interests."[742]

This truism was amply demonstrated by the Italians and Hungarians in WWII. Their alliance pledges meant nothing when the tide of the war shifted. The German allies began to look towards defecting, while the Germans became intent on watching for indications of disloyalty.

Similarly, history is replete with instances of when governments who supported/propped up regimes or strongmen decided it was no longer in their best interest to support the regime/leader in place and orchestrated a coup, often aided by the use of strategic sabotage. Examples include Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam in 1963, Juan José Torres in Bolivia in 1971, Isabel Perón in Argentina in 1976, Jean-Claude Duvalier in Haiti in 1986, and briefly Hugo Chavez in Venezuela in 2002, to name a few.

Importantly, understanding the importance that national interest plays in determining strategy becomes an important building block for understanding strategic sabotage, both from an offensive and defensive perspective. Indeed, the objectives/interests/agenda of both friends and foes becomes an important catalyst for action.[743] Comprehension of when those interests change, or more importantly become counter to one's own, is thus vital for knowing when to deny, disrupt or destroy opposing programs. Sabotage without a strong connection to national interest, undertaken episodically and haphazardly, is likely to remain a tactical nuisance at best or a liability at worst.

CLANDESTINITY AND ATTRIBUTION

Central to strategic sabotage in the era of Great Power Competition is the concept of attribution. Deniability is key. In fact, better than deniability is the ability to achieve the aim without garnering any suspicion. The killing of Benno Ohnesorg in West Berlin by a Stasi agent in 1967 is one such example. However, in most instances, suspicion quickly gravitates towards antagonists such as the case in the numerous attacks against the Iranian nuclear program, in which both Israel and the U.S. are largely seen as responsible.[744] Similarly, the agitation, sedition and subsequent civil war in the Ukraine was largely seen as Russian intervention, but constant, emphatic denials by the Kremlin delayed opposition outrage long enough to allow them to achieve their objectives, particularly in the Crimea.[745] The denial and ambiguity of involvement bought enough time to allow events to progress to the point of no return and more problematically for the West, quicker intelligence cycles and decision-making could make sense of what was happening.[746]

Deniability has its downsides, however. Despite Western denials, some Great Power Competitors are convinced that globalization and the so-called "Color Revolutions" (2000-2005), as well as the Arab Spring (2010-2012) and other such spontaneous popular uprisings were carefully planned, orchestrated strategic sabotage actions by the United States.[747] While maintaining a level of plausible deniability is desirable in strategic sabotage, the case studies also suggest there are times when attribution is useful. At the tactical level and in the Norsk Hydro mission during World War II, the saboteurs left specific items so the Germans knew exactly who conducted it. The operators felt this attribution was necessary to prevent severe reprisals and collective

punishment for which the Germans were well known against the local Norwegian population. At the strategic level, attribution without direct acknowledgement can be a method of signalling an opponent. The attribution of the Stuxnet attack to the United States allegedly was conducted through presumably sanctioned leaks of at least one senior Obama Administration official to David Sanger of the *New York Times*.[748] The revelations in Sanger's subsequent articles and books signalled a willingness of the Administration to deter by denial further Iranian efforts to acquire fissile material through enrichment paved the way for subsequent negotiations resulting in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and the United Nations.[749]

LIMITED COST AND RISK

Strategic sabotage is appealing to national-level decision-makers for their apparent ability to damage or frustrate their opponents with little cost or risk. The most effective strategic sabotage missions are just that: the truest expression of "economy of force" options in which a very modest investment, compared with other instruments of national power and influence, holds the promise of wildly disproportionate returns. Without sufficient connection to national goals and policies, or meeting the operational and functional requirements below, strategic sabotage is likely to founder or lead to disproportionate "blowback," or negative strategic consequences. German attempts at strategic sabotage in the United States during World Wars I and II had just such consequences. In World War I, the sabotage of the Black Tom and Kingsland munitions facilities in New Jersey was a contributing factor in President Woodrow Wilson's eventual decision to enter the war the following year.[750] During World War II, inept efforts to land German saboteurs by U-boat for Operation Pastorius played its part in ensuring no further sabotage operations could succeed in the United States for the remainder of the war.[751]

Operational Requirements

INTELLIGENCE

As important as national-level requirements are those operationally for accurate, timely intelligence. The greater the investment in ascertaining facts, details, assessments, layout, patterns of life/behaviour, personalities (i.e. weaknesses, preferences, inclinations) etc., the greater the chance of success.

As such, the wider the network of trustworthy, credible and reliable sources, the greater the level of dependable information. Careful attention must be focused on recruiting, nurturing and managing agents and informants.[752] Indeed, the Norsk Hydro sabotage mission would not have had its staggering results were it not for the elegant sources of information inside and outside of the facilities that continually updated training, preparations, and conduct of the mission. Equally to vetting and recruiting agents, other co-operative entities, whether corporate, commercial, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-state actors, can knowingly or unsuspectingly provide a wealth of information. In sum, the deeper, wider and dependable the network, the greater the likelihood of empowering national intelligence collection assets to build the necessary "picture" to allow for successful sabotage operations. For example, the unattributable sabotage of the Ukrainian military warehouse used for storing 188,000 tons of ammunition, as well as weapons, in Kalinovka, was mysteriously destroyed in an inferno that forced the evacuation of 30,000 residents nearby. The target was clearly identified, as well as the means to penetrate and destroy it. Although the Russians are suspected, no evidence to tie them to the travesty has been found.[753]

Importantly, intelligence collection should extend beyond the classical military target set (e.g. personnel, equipment, command and control, key infrastructure) and should also take into account the CQ quotient. Specifically, societal tensions and cleavages, target regime weaknesses, opposition parties and movements, as well as key facilitators and enablers. This information can be used to develop sabotage attacks on such lines of operation as fomenting social agitation and dissent, crippling industrial and economic capabilities, decreasing trust in government, disrupting public confidence in key societal processes (e.g. banking, media, government and elections).[754]

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE (CQ)

As a subset of intelligence, cultural intelligence is defined as "the ability to recognize the shared beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours of a group of people and, most importantly, to apply this knowledge toward a specific goal."[755] Its role in the success of strategic sabotage is not merely essential but critical. A sound knowledge of CQ will allow a greater comprehension of national and personal inclinations, behaviours, decision-making processes, temperaments, and history, all of which can lead to assistance in targeting, (particularly

for the best desired effect), as well as defending against sabotage. Indeed, understanding an opponent's inclination and behaviours in a given context, and knowing their risk tolerance, as well as favoured TTPs, for example, can be instrumental in achieving a desired effect. For example, in the World War II case studies presented in this volume, CQ was instrumental in the success of Norsk Hydro heavy water sabotage mission as well as the tepid results of the Blackmail programme in occupied France. More recently, the successful Russian interference in the 2016 elections and subsequent manipulation of the Trump Administration were based in great part on the Russian understanding of personalities, as well as the social divisions within American society.[756]

Moreover, researchers have identified that a Russian tactic to sow discord within target countries is to use alienated social groups.[757] Quite simply, they conclude, "as social trust and public confidence wane in western societies, the potential for division and upheaval grows." Russian links to gun clubs, vigilante groups, veterans' organisations, biker gangs, military re-enactment societies and even paintballing enthusiasts have been recorded in a number of European countries. As such, "Russian intelligence officers have identified a potential in these groups, whether in politicisation, help in intelligence activities such as cover-creation, money-transfer or errand-running, or for outright subversion and insurrection."[758] In fact, the mercurial rise of the "Yellow Vest" movement in France triggered its counter-intelligence agency to investigate potential Russian links.[759]

Consequently, CQ is an important enabler in strategic sabotage. Firstly, a deep understanding of an opponent allows for better and more precise targeting and option selection. Decision-makers can be manipulated/played based on personal weaknesses (e.g., ego, proclivities), risk tolerance and priorities, and tensions/cleavages within targeted societies can be exacerbated through agitation, subversion and disinformation. Concomitantly, CQ can enhance the ability to analyze one's own organization and society to identify possible vulnerabilities and potential targets to defend against foreign attacks.

OPERATIONAL SECURITY (OPSEC)

It should come as no surprise that operational security is instrumental to the success of strategic sabotage. Secrecy of plans, tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) is paramount to successful sabotage. In war or conflict, and

particularly in times of "peace"/competition, secrecy is all important. Whether the acts of strategic sabotage are carried out in the target country, a third location, in cyberspace or on social platforms, the need for innovation, stealth, as well as agility of thought and action are required. In the renewed era of Great Power Competition, attribution, or more precisely the ability to hide in the shadow of plausible deniability, becomes all important. Therefore, movement, preparation and execution, whether conducted in a largely non-permissive environment or in cyberspace, the ability to hide identity and intentions becomes all important.

Quite simply, failure to keep personnel or plans a secret will lead to failure and even more importantly, can have significant adverse consequences. Examples of success include the Norsk Hydro sabotage, the CIA's provision of Stinger missiles to the Mujahideen in Afghanistan in the 1980s and, more recently, the Iranian supply of explosively formed penetrators to insurgent forces in Iraq. Other instances include the numerous assaults on the Iranian nuclear program.[760] From disrupting software that leads to process failures, to the destruction of infrastructure to the assassination of key personnel, the ability to conceal intent, actual target(s) and execution is the key to mission completion. Another, successful model is the assaults on Saudi Arabian oil tankers and infrastructure. Within the month of December 2020, four separate successful attacks were conducted.[761] Conversely, failure to pay proper attention to OPSEC is catastrophic. The failed coup attempt in Venezuela in 2020, similar to other failed putsches, (e.g. Indonesia in 1957 and Equatorial Guinea in 2004) were scuppered because security forces had learned of the intended plan.

Cyber Warfare

The explosion of computing and informational technology has created an entirely new vulnerability to be exploited. The world has become so immersed in digital technology that our everyday existence in about everything we do has a digital footprint. As such, individuals, organizations and nations represent target rich environment. According to the RAND Corporation, "Cyber warfare involves the actions by a nation-state or international organization to attack and attempt to damage another nation's computers or information networks through, for example, computer viruses or denial-of-service attacks."[762]

Not surprisingly, our information-obsessed digital global community has proven fertile ground for strategic sabotage. It represents a viable, highly-effective means of striking an opponent with relative deniability of state sponsorship, yet in a frighteningly potentially destructive manner. The British military has revealed that it is facing sixty cyber attacks a day.[763] This number is not surprising as nations such as Russia, China, North Korea and Iran have shown their ability to create havoc. The Russian interference in Estonia, Ukraine and Georgia were all shaped and enhanced through cyber attacks. In addition, they have also been alleged to be responsible for the SolarWinds Orion Code software hack that affected the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), as well as 18,000 domestic and international groups. Experts considered the hacking campaign as "extraordinary in scale, with the intruders having stalked through government agencies, defence contractors and telecommunications companies for months by the time it was discovered."[764]

In addition, China is believed responsible for a large number of cyber attacks that are responsible for penetrating the U.S. National Finance Center, exposing CIA agents in Africa and Europe, and ransacking information from the U.S. military, commercial organizations and private citizens. One report noted:

> In addition to masterminding the OPM breach, hackers linked to Chinese intelligence would filch private information from over 383 million individuals, including passport and credit card data, in a massive 2014 compromise of the hotel giant Marriott; pilfer personal information from over 78 million Americans in a 2014 breach of Anthem, the major health insurance provider; breach the networks of American Airlines, United Airlines, and Sabre, a top travel reservation provider (and key target for China's travel intelligence program); and burrow into computer systems belonging to the U.S. Department of the Navy, stealing sensitive data linked to over 100,000 naval personnel, among other penetrations of the U.S. private and public sectors. The Chinese "were always a Hoover, sucking up mountains of data beyond anything else in the world," recalled a former senior National Security Agency official.[765]

These cyber attacks are not generally one-sided. The U.S., Britain, and Israel, for example, have conducted cyber attacks both as retribution, as well as to hinder actions of their opponents. For instance, both the U.S. and Israel

are believed responsible for having planted the Stuxnet virus to frustrate Iranian nuclear ambitions and the Israelis are believed to have brought the busy Iranian Shahid Rajaee port terminal to a crashing halt by means of a cyber attack on 9 May 2020.[766]

Clearly, many, if not all, international actors have attempted to utilize cyber warfare. Often the perpetrators remain unknown. Regardless, the question of attribution is always present. Is it a lone hacker challenging their ability? Or, is it a state sponsored attack trying to test capability, seize information or create havoc within a target country? For example, in February 2021, an unknown hacker took control of the water treatment facility in Pinellas County, Florida, in an attempt to tamper with the water supply. The intruder attempted to raise the level of sodium hydroxide to more than 100 times its normal levels, which could have poisoned a significant number of people had the intrusion not been stopped in time.[767]

Clearly, the scale and scope of potential cyber attacks are virtually unlimited. Indisputably, they can wreak havoc with governments, militaries, economies and the safety of vast populations. As such, cyber attacks represent a particularly menacing method of strategic sabotage, which warrants fastidious emphasis on the defence, as well as consideration as a very potent weapon for offensive action.

Non-State Actors/Proxy Groups

The case studies also provide a compelling case for the use of proxy groups to conduct strategic sabotage.[768] First and foremost, such actors and proxies allow Great Power Competitors to maintain a level of plausible deniable for their strategic sabotage actions, placing the onus of attribution and prevention on their opponents. Whether militias as used by Iran, or ex-patriot groups intent on ridding their former country of a leader and taking over the reigns of power as was seen in the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, or the abortive bid in Venezuela in 2020, or the use of mercenaries in innumerable botched coup attempts, or private military corporations (PMCs) as in the case of Libya and Syria, the use of proxies brings with it both potential reward and risk.[769] The difference between success and failure in these instances is often determined by the time spent on training, facilitating and supporting the entity in question. If effort has been invested in ensuring the entity is properly

trained and resourced and led, success is more likely. Importantly, attribution becomes difficult to peg on a state sponsor with the use of proxies as the chimera of independence and deniability is strong in avoiding responsibility.[770] In fact, state sponsored attacks conducted by its own agents under the guise/cover of a proxy-initiated attack also provides a more directed and controlled action, (with presumably more success), while still allowing for a facade of deniability.

However, if no effort is made by the sponsoring state in vetting the proxy force in question, then the risk is enormous. Inexperience, poor leadership, inept execution of the task, OPSEC violations, the committal of outrages and excesses, can all tarnish international reputations and destroy the avoidance of attribution, (e.g. Bay of Pigs, the failed Seychelles operation, ISI sponsored operations in the Kashmir and India).

The case of Iranian proxies raises the question of control, and as that chapter outlines, highlights the principal/agent problem that exists in all organizations but is particularly acute with proxy ones. If the proxy force over-extends itself and undertakes operations beyond those sanctioned, due to the preferences of its own leaders, state sponsors risk being dragged into an unwanted or unnecessary conflict. A perfect example is the Iranian-affiliated militias in Iraq.[771] Their continued, seemingly uncontrolled, rocket attacks on U.S. forces and establishment in Iraq created great possibility for consequential political turmoil for Iraq and potential retribution for Iran and its militias in Iraq.[772]

In sum, proxies provide a viable method for conducting strategic sabotage, either to conduct the attack or provide cover for plausible deniability. However, careful vetting, training and resourcing are essential for success. A hands-off approach, or similarly, trusting in expat leaders or hopefuls, or mercenary forces intending to cash-in on taking control or, facilitating those who seek power, has proven historically to be a challenge to success.

Expertise

A corollary to proxy forces is the function of expertise and experience. Expertise of trusted agents to carry out strategic sabotage is essential for success. Haste not only makes waste; in strategic sabotage selecting and/or fielding insufficiently trained or qualified agents will doom efforts to failure. As noted

earlier, examples abound of inept mercenaries, expat militias and "wanna-be" dictators who are sponsored by states that failed to fully vet, prepare, train, or question the plans of those sent to undertake a specific action.

Certainly, the investment of personnel and resources make an enormous difference. The Norsk Hydro saboteurs were carefully vetted and exquisitely trained to carry out their actions against the German heavy water cells. More recently, the Stuxnet virus attack on the Iranian nuclear facility and the subsequent assassination of Iranian scientists; and the physical destruction of nuclear facilities were conducted expertly, leaving little physical evidence of the perpetrators. In addition, the Russian use of hackers and cyber experts has reaped tremendous success in sowing dissention, creating turmoil and shaping the destruction of societies to allow for subsequent action to achieve specific political goals. Other Great Power Competitors have followed suit in more insidious forms of sabotage. One such example is the Chinese Seagate Maxtor Basics Personal Storage 3200 hard-drives that were infected with a Trojan Horse virus in November 2007. The virus was designed to copy information on the computer and send it to a Beijing website without the user's knowledge and it provides another example of expertise in the design and execution of means to achieve ascendency over competitors.[773]

Expertise contains a flip side of which decision-makers need to be aware. Sufficient training and preparation can lead to highly disproportionate outcomes, sometimes even against expectations. Being flushed with the success of their agents and proxies, however, can lead decision-makers to overestimate the tasks they can accomplish. The Blackmail sabotage case provides a cautionary warning in this regard. Overly optimistic expectations of further returns, combined with organizations looking to demonstrate their value and relevance, led to some field agents being assigned a range of different missions with little chance of success.

Clearly, for successful strategic sabotage operations, sponsoring states must invest the time and money in recruiting, shaping, training and educating and mentoring its agents and the leadership of its proxy forces. Motivation and dedication to a cause are only part of the required personal material needed to conduct successful mission. Expert skill and knowledge are also paramount for success.

CHAPTER 15

CONTROL OF INFORMATION AND THE NARRATIVE

Arguably Western Democracies, particularly their militaries, have not fully comprehended the importance of the public discourse, namely ensuring there is a compelling, inspiring as well as effective narrative. The narrative must be sufficiently flexible to ensure its coherence to, and connectivity with, actions across a spectrum of multiple audiences to provide an interpretive structure for action.[774] Such narratives are also key to deniability, as well as countering storylines, disinformation and attempts at influencing and disrupting events in other states, including elections.

In fact, globalization and the ascendency of computing and information technologies and the plethora of on-line, print/television/radio media, as well as social media platforms have spawned an explosion of disinformation and "truth decay." A RAND report has labeled the broad spectrum of false narratives "hostile social manipulation," which it defines as "the purposeful, systematic generation and dissemination of information to produce harmful social, political, and economic outcomes in a target country by affecting beliefs, attitudes, and behavior."[775] Examples are legion. For instance, Russian efforts to influence elections and propagate discord and create and/or widen existing social cleavages in the West through disinformation and propaganda, as well as the Chinese programs designed to shape regional narratives and gain political leverage in specific countries are but two examples.[776]

The narrative is critical in providing context and rationale to decisions made and events that have transpired. A compelling narrative, or disinformation, can also be used as a weapon against competitors. As noted above, "hostile social manipulation" can be used to create discord, or coupled with existing tensions or instability, can fuel existing fires and create infernos. For example, one report concluded:

> We believe that Russia is trying to generate, spread, and amplify falsehoods that distort views of "us" versus "them," with the desired outcomes of (1) driving people to view each other as either friends or adversaries, or (2) exhausting people to the point that they disengage from civic affairs altogether, with the result of political paralysis. Russia's Tactics Aim to Polarize Americans and Paralyze the U.S. Political Process These tactics consist of attempts at polarizing and disrupting

> social cohesion. Some tactics aim to exacerbate divisive issues, such as racial inequities or immigration. Others target public confidence in democratic institutions and processes as a way to undermine social trust. Underlying these efforts is a broader tactic of using falsehoods to spread confusion, drive groups of people to extreme positions, and generate collective exhaustion within U.S. society.[777]

Importantly, the narrative is key to deniability, as well as countering opponent storylines, disinformation and attempts at influencing and disrupting events in other states.[778] However, effective narratives designed to stymie competitors need not be disinformation.[779] The truth is often the most compelling argument and the best narrative to influence target audiences. The actions of an American Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha (3rd Special Forces Group) and a Psychological Operations Detachment (7th Psychological Operations Battalion) provide an excellent example of the power of the narrative to thwart competitors. In Nigeria there were a number of billboards depicting Chinese involvement in the construction of a deep-water port in the southern Port of Harcourt as part of their "Belt and Road Initiative."[780] The Americans created an influence campaign/narrative that discredited Chinese activities and consequently impeded the Chinese from purchasing land by igniting long-standing friction between Nigerian workers and Chinese corporations, which ignited protests around Chinese businesses in Abuja. Within two weeks, the Chinese construction company lost 60 per cent of its required labour pool for the port expansion. Concomitantly, the SOF team worked with the U.S. Embassy, USAID, and local NGOs to establish a job fair near protest areas to provide employment for the impacted Nigerian workers.[781]

Similar to cyber warfare, the use of information technology to advance narratives, both true and false, will likely increasingly become a devastating tool to sabotage opponents. As such, emphasis must be placed on influence activities in the context of both the offensive and the defensive.

INSTABILITY

Instability using indirect, non-kinetic means opens many possibilities for current and future strategic sabotage. Instability in society or government, whether due to economic, political, religious or social reasons, allows opponents to exacerbate existing social cleavages with little relative effort, from

a distance, and behind a cloak of anonymity. As was seen in the Ukraine, agitation and sedition, combined with disinformation and focused cyber attack (e.g., banking system, government services), enhances the disruption in society and allows for scapegoating and misdirection. Perhaps mostly importantly, cyber means give real teeth and open new strategic sabotage possibilities for the derided and almost neglected fields of political warfare and "active measures."[782] Furthermore, instability normally allows for creation or expansion of ungoverned space, which can be quickly filled with proxy organizations that can fill the void to further exacerbate dissention, lead to the break-down of government, and foment violence. As such, strategic sabotage can comprise a layered effort. Its first steps create tension in society that could lead to political and societal instability, which then can open the door to greater action leading to the fulfillment of strategic goals or the disruption of those of your target and/or competitors.

So What?

So, what does it all mean? It is important first and foremost to keep strategic sabotage in context. Sabotage is by its nature damaging. While it has destructive potential and can contribute to achieving policy objectives or winning victory, sabotage is not or cannot be decisive. It is also important to note that strategic sabotage does not necessarily need to be military in practice. Historically there has been a fairly clear division between military and paramilitary sabotage activities, based largely on targets, authorities, and available organizations. If anything, paramilitary sabotage efforts have eclipsed military ones in their number and effectiveness. The divide between military and paramilitary activities from an operational and legal point of view, however, is increasingly becoming blurry given advances in technology and changes in the character of war.[783] The increasing interconnectivity of individuals, devices, and systems, however, opens up remarkable new possibilities for strategic sabotage. In fact, in the era of Great Power Competition, arguably most strategic sabotage takes the form of non-kinetic activities through the cyber domain. For instance, disinformation, cyber attacks, economic action (e.g., flooding or influencing the market [Game-Stopping], debt-diplomacy, sanctions, embargoes, tariffs), industrial and intellectual espionage, all act to advantage the attacker and disadvantage the target.[784]

CHAPTER 15

The observations/lessons from the case studies in this volume suggest that most successful strategic sabotage includes the following factors:

1. A clear national objective;
2. A sound understanding of CQ, specifically a solid comprehension of national temperament (i.e. what is generally acceptable to one's own society/public) and that of the target state/entity (i.e. how decisions are made, risk tolerance, how target population will likely act, how target entity will likely respond);
3. Secrecy, and more specifically, an investment in high level of operational security;
4. Precise intelligence based on a wide array of platforms/methodologies (including human intelligence) to develop a detailed, accurate assessment of risks, challenges, personalities, geo-political factors, infrastructure, etc;
5. Trusted agents capable of conducting the operations;
6. Adequate resources and support to ensure the operation can prevail (i.e. if strategic sabotage is undertaken it has full commitment). A "let's wait and see what happens" approach to questionable plots and perpetrators is never a recipe for success;
7. Proper shaping is required (e.g. put into place necessary training, resourcing, intelligence collection, network support (e.g. human, cyber, informational);
8. A planned narrative/counter-narrative must be prepared to shape events in the target country (if applicable) as well as to disassociate attribution; and
9. Clear abort criteria.

In summation, this study does not provide the final word on strategic sabotage. If nothing else, it suggests a dimension of competition badly in need of more rigorous and systematic consideration, exploration, and experimentation. Such efforts are necessary to avoid the historical pitfalls common with many new, emerging, or rediscovered phenomena: overestimating their effectiveness and seeing in them the solution to the most vexing foreign policy problems, while simultaneously underestimating their challenges and costs.

CONTRIBUTORS

BALASEVICIUS – Tony Balasevicius retired from the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in 2013. He is currently a contractor working on various projects for the Department of National Defence. During his career he served in a variety of staff and command positions. His most recent postings included working in the Concept Group at the Canadian Army Warfare Centre in Kingston, the Directorate of Land Requirements as a military faculty directing staff (DS) in the Department of Applied Military Science at The Royal Military College of Canada (RMCC), and the Director of Future Security Analysis and with Canadian Forces Intelligence Command. His research focus includes Arctic security, the Russian military buildup in the Arctic, Russian military transformation, hybrid warfare and future war. Tony Balasevicius is a graduate of RMCC, the Canadian Forces Staff School, Canadian Land Forces Command and Staff College, the Canadian Forces Command and Staff College, and the Army Technical Staff Officers Programme. He has published numerous works on a variety of military subjects.

BLOCKSOME – Dr. Patricia J. Blocksome is an assistant professor in the National Security Affairs Department at the U.S. Naval War College-Monterey, and adjunct faculty at USSOCOM's Joint Special Operations University (JSOU). Her research focuses on special operations; irregular, unconventional and proxy warfare; and rebel group operations and strategy. She is the vice president for research at the Special Operations Research Association (SORA), managing editor of *Special Operations Journal*, and on the editorial board of the *Journal of Interdisciplinary Conflict Science*.

COOMBS – Dr. Howard G. Coombs is an Associate Professor and the Associate Chair of War Studies at RRMC, in Kingston, Ontario. He is also a part-time Canadian Army reservist with the Office of the Chief of Reserves, located at the CAF National Defence Headquarters. Dr. Coombs received his PhD in Military History from Queen's University, in Kingston. His research interests are Canadian professional military education, in addition to Canadian military operations and training. In 2020, he was the first Canadian Mobilising Insights

in Defence and Security Programme (MINDS) Fellow at the NATO Defence College in Rome, Italy.

HORN – Colonel (Retired) Bernd Horn, PhD is a former infantry officer who has held key command and staff appointments in the Canadian Armed Forces, including Deputy Commander of Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM), Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment and Officer Commanding 3 Commando, the Canadian Airborne Regiment. He is currently the CANSOFCOM Command Historian, an appointment he fills as a civilian. Dr. Horn is also an adjunct professor of history at RMCC and a senior fellow at JSOU in Tampa.

KIRAS – Dr. James D. Kiras is a Professor at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, where he has directed the School's course of instruction on irregular warfare for sixteen years. He is a Senior Fellow at JSOU in Tampa, a Fellow of Irregular Warfare Studies at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School, Hurlburt Field, Florida, and a founding member of SORA and its peer-reviewed publication, the *Special Operations Journal*.

MARTYN – Dr. Robert Martyn is retired from the Canadian military, having served as a Search & Rescue NCO, and as an officer within Intelligence and the Reserve Infantry. Despite spending an inordinate amount of time jumping from airplanes and military diving, he squeezed in deployments to Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Cyprus. After receiving his Doctorate in history from Queen's University, he did post-Doctoral research into Intelligence and insurgencies at Carleton University, and participated in the inaugural Teaching Terrorism program at the College of William and Mary. When not pursuing national security and radicalization issues, his time is divided between craft beer and his Harley-Davidson. He is married to an amazingly tolerant woman.

McCABE – Dr. Peter McCabe is a contractor (METIS – a PAE company) and serves as a Resident Senior Fellow at JSOU. He came to JSOU from the U.S. Central Command where he worked as a strategic policy planner. Prior to that, he retired from the U.S. Air Force as a colonel in 2011. He received his PhD in political science from the University of Florida with a focus on international relations and comparative politics.

CONTRIBUTORS

McFARLANE – Captain Nevin McFarlane joined the CAF as a Naval Warfare Officer and completed his undergraduate degree at RMCC in Military and Strategic Studies. He deployed on Operation Artemis with the Royal Canadian Navy where he was involved in counter-terrorism operations and seizing narcotic shipments. Later transferring to the Royal Canadian Air Force, he completed one tour on Operation Impact where he worked as a staff officer in the joint headquarters in Kuwait. Captain McFarlane recently completed his Masters of Arts in War Studies at RMCC where he focused on *maskirovka* in the twenty-first century.

MILLER – Jordan Miller is currently a PhD student at RMC. His area of focus is on information operations and propaganda, its structure, methods, and its role in modern warfare and conflict. His previous research topics include the triggers of state failure, political-military wargaming, social network analysis in irregular warfare, and evaluating emerging technologies for military application. He is currently employed in corporate strategy and public relations.

KRAMER – Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas J. Kramer is a U.S. Army Middle East Foreign Area Officer and was a strategic planner at USSOCOM. Lieutenant Colonel Kramer has deployed as an infantry officer to Iraq and as a Special Forces Detachment Commander to Afghanistan. He holds a master's degree in Non-proliferation and Terrorism Studies from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, California.

RAMSAY – Nicolas Ramsay is currently enrolled in the Master of War Studies program at RMCC. With degrees from Carleton University and Nipissing University, military history has always been a key fascination of his life. This love for anything history has spanned decades and has included multiple awards and accolades. This lifelong work is intended to turn into a career teaching military art and science.

SPENCER – Dr. Emily Spencer has a PhD in War Studies from RMCC, as well as a Certificate of Management Excellence from Harvard Business School. She is currently a member of the Commander's Advisory Group and the former Director of the CANSOFCOM Education and Research Centre. Her present research focuses on personal development and authentic leadership from both academic and applied perspectives. As an Integral Master Coach™,

Dr. Spencer also provides leadership performance coaching for CANSOFCOM and CAF members. Additionally, she has published widely in the areas of cultural intelligence, the importance of cultural knowledge to success in the contemporary operating environment, particularly as it applies to SOF, as well as the role the media plays in shaping understandings of world events. Dr. Spencer is also an adjunct professor of history at RMCC and a senior fellow at JSOU in Tampa.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

A2/AD	Anti-Access / Area Denial
AAH	Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH)
AFN	Armed Forces Network
AQI	Al-Qaeda in Iraq
ATA	Afghanistan Transitional Authority (ATA)
AVH	*Államvédelmi Hatóság* (State Protection Authority)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDA	Bomb Damage Assessment
BSC	British Security Cooperation
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CANSOFCOM	Canadian Special Operations Forces Command
CDMA	Cyber Defence Management Authority
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CEP	Counter Extremism Project (CEP)
CERT	Computer Emergency Response Team
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
CSO	Consular Security Officers
CVE	Counter Violent Extremism
DDoS	Distributed denial of service
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DNS	Domain Name Systems
DoD	Department of Defense
Dos	Denial of Service
DS	Directing Staff
E3	France, Germany, United Kingdom
EFP	Explosively formed penetrating
ENISA	European Network and Information Security Agency
EU	European Union

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FFI	French Forces of the Interior
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organization
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GRU	*Glavnoye razvedyvatel'noye upravleniye* (foreign military intelligence agency – Russia)
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IRA	Internet Research Agency
IRGC	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate
IT	Information Technology
JAM	Jaish al-Mahdi
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
JIOC	Joint Intelligence Operations Centre
JSOU	Joint Special Operations University
KAL	Korean Airlines
KGB	*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* (Committee for State Security / Secret Police)
KH	Kata'ib Hezbollah
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer
MEW	Ministry of Economic Warfare
MfS	*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* (State Security Service)
MoH	Ministry of Health
MS	*meropriyatiya sodeistviya* (support measures)
NA	National Archives
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCIRC TC	NATO Computer Incident Response Capability Technical Centre

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

NDS	National Defense Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIS	National Intelligence Service
NRM	Nordic Resistance Movement
NSC	National Security Council
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive 166
OAS	Organization of American States
OPSEC	Operational Security
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PCO	Passport Control Officer
PMC	Private Military Corporation
PSUV	*Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela* (United Socialist Party of Venezuela)
RAF	Royal Air Force
RFE	Radio Free Europe
RIM	Russian Imperial Movement
RL	Radio Liberty
RMCC	Royal Military College of Canada
RN	Royal Navy
RT	Russia Today
RWE	Right-Wing Extremism
SAS	Special Air Service
SCIRI	Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq
SDGT	Specially Designated Global Terrorist
SEATO	South-East Asia Treaty Organization
SED	Socialist Unity Party
SF	Special Forces
SFHQ	Special Forces Headquarters
SIIC	Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SOOAR	Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research Unit
SORA	Special Operations Research Association
SRO	Schmid Roos Ost
STS	Special Training School

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

TTP	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
TWP	Traditionalist Worker Party (TWP)
UK	United Kingdom
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations
U.S.	United States
USSF	United States Special Forces
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VOA	Voice of America
VK	VKontakte
WNCM	World National-Conservative Movement
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
9/11	11 September 2001 terrorist attack in New York

ENDNOTES

INTRODUCTION

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20 For a detailed study of Hybrid Warfare see Colonel Bernd Horn, *On Hybrid Warfare* (Kingston, ON: CANSOFCOM PDC Press, 2016).

21 Maria Snegovaya, Putin's Information Warfare in Ukraine Soviet Origins Of Russia's Hybrid Warfare, Institute for the Study of War, September 2015, 7, 10.

22 Patrick M. Duggan, "Strategic Development of Special Warfare in Cyberspace," *Joint Forces Quarterly* Vol. 79, 4th Quarter (2015): 47.

23 The Chinese view of competition go beyond even the ideas discussed thus far. According to Major-General He Fuchu, Vice President of PLA Academy of Military Science, "The sphere of operations will be expanded from the physical domain and the information domain to the domain of consciousness; the human brain will become a new combat space. Consequently, success on the future battlefield will require achieving not only 'biological dominance' but also 'mental /cognitive dominance' and 'intelligence dominance.' In fact, He Fuchu anticipates the development of a "'new brain-control weaponry' that interferes with and controls people's consciousness, thereby subverting combat styles." Cited in Elsa B. Kania, "Minds at War. China's Pursuit of Military Advantage through Cognitive Science and Biotechnology," *Prism*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (2019): 85.

CHAPTER 1

24 Blayney F. Matthews, *The Specter of Sabotage* (Los Angeles, CA: Lymanhouse, 1941), 16.

25 "sabotage, n." OED Online. December 2020. Oxford University Press, internet; https://www-oed-com.libproxy.nps.edu/view/Entry/169373, accessed 4 January 2021.

26 The term "significant object" is used by McGeorge and Ketcham, though they specify that the object should be physically destroyed. Harvey J. McGeorge and Christine C. Ketcham, "Sabotage: A Strategic Tool for Guerrilla Forces." *World Affairs* Vol. 146, No. 3 (1983): 250.

27 Ladislas Farago, *War of Wits: The Anatomy of Espionage and Intelligence* (New York, NY: Paperback Library, 1962), 181-183.

28 Michael Sayers, *Sabotage! The Secret War Against America* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1942), 131-132; Matthews, 54-56.

29 Johan Galtung, "Two Concepts of Defense." *Bulletin of Peace Proposals* Vol. 9, No. 4: 333.

30 McGeorge and Ketcham, "Sabotage," 251.

31 Thomas Rid, "Cyber war will not take place," *Journal of Strategic Studies* Vol. 35, No. 1: 20.

32 Keith R. Grimes, "Small Force—Big Impact: The Strategic Value of WWII Raiding Forces" (master's thesis, U.S. Army War College, 1972).

33 Rory Cormac and Richard J Aldrich. "Grey Is the New Black: Covert Action and Implausible Deniability," *International Affairss* Vol. 94, No. 3: 477-494.

34 Howard L. Douthit, III, "The Use and Effectiveness of Sabotage as a Means of Unconventional Warfare – An Historical Perspective from World War I Through Viet Nam" (master's thesis, Air Force Institute of Technology, Air University, 1987), 7.

35 A similar definition, though one that focuses only on the destruction of physical objects, is proposed by Douthit, III, "The Use and Effectiveness...," 9.

36 This article's formulation of four types of saboteurs differs from that of Weaver, who proposed eight types (the mentally disturbed individual, terrorists or revolutionary groups, enemy agents, co-opted U.S. or allied personnel, organized undergrounds, guerrilla forces, local sympathizers, special military forces) and that of Farago, who proposed four (citizens against their government, citizens against occupation forces, one country against another, in support of military operations). Richard L. Weaver. "Countersabotage: The AFOSI Role in Air Base Defense," AD-B066920L. Report No. 82-2625, (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, Air Command and Staff College, 1982), cited in Douthit, III, "The Use and Effectiveness...," 2.; Farago, *War of Wits*, 189.

37 Farago, *War of Wits,* 191-193.

38 J. K. Zawodny, "Guerrilla and Sabotage: Organization, Operations, Motivations, Escalation." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 341, 13.

39 Farago, *War of Wits,* 191.

40 Douthit, III, "The Use and Effectiveness...," 100.

41 Matthews, *The Specter of Sabotage,* 21.

42 McGeorge II and Ketcham, "Sabotage," 250.

43 Farago, *War of Wits,* 189.

44 Ibid., 188-189.

45 McGeorge II and Ketcham, 254.

46 Farago, *War of Wits,* 190-191.

47 Ibid., 191.

48 Douthit, III, "The Use and Effectiveness...," 99.

49 "Simple Sabotage Field Manual," Strategic Services Field Manual No. 3, Washington, DC: Office of Strategic Services, 1944), 2.

50 Colin S. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010), 18.

51 Harry R. Yarger, "Toward a Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and the U.S. Army War College Strategy Model," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues, Volume I: Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2008), 45.

52 Ibid., 45.

53 Ibid., 43-49.

54 Ibid., 47.

55 The formulation of decisive versus cumulative effects proposed here differs from that of Farago, who identifies three forms of sabotage: direct (violent), indirect (non-violent), and psychological. Decisive and cumulative sabotage strategies may both incorporate violent, non-violent, and psychological elements. Farago, *War of Wits*, 181.

56 Colin S. Gray, *Tactical Operations for Strategic Effect: The Challenge of Currency Conversion* (Tampa, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2015).

CHAPTER 2

57 William Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE* (London: St Ermin's Press, 2000), xvii.

58 Ibid., 754. The SOE operated worldwide with the exception of the Soviet Union. It consisted of two branches – one to provide facilities (i.e. money, clothing, forged papers, training, weapons, ciphers and signals), the other to execute missions.

59 Patrick Howarth, *Undercover. The Men and Women of the SOE* (London: Phoenix Press, 1980), 26.

60 Bill Macdonald, *The True Intrepid. Sir William Stephenson and the Unknown Agents* (Surrey, B.C: Timberholme Books Ltd., 1998), 54.

61 The U.S. congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts in the 1930s as a result of the increasing conflict in Europe and Asia. Their genesis was spawned by a growing sentiment of isolationism and non-interventionism in the U.S. following its involvement in the First World War. There was a popular belief, supported by the Nye Committee hearings (1934-1936) and a number of books that American participation in the First World War was orchestrated by bankers and arms dealers for financial gain. As a result, powerful lobbies in Congress pushed for non-interventionism. Importantly, Democratic President F.D. Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, were critical of the Neutrality Acts.

62 British Security Coordination, *The Secret History of British Intelligence in the Americas, 1940-1945* (New York: Fromm International, 1999), xxvi. (Henceforth BSC)

63 Cited in Ibid., 72.

64 *BSC*, xxx. The BSC actually represented a number of British departments and organizations, specifically: a. SIS; b. Security Executive; c. SOE; d. MI5 (Security Service); and e. Passport Control. "British Offices in Washington," 24 March 1943. NA, HS7/76, File History 43, Notes on American Organisations and Personnel.

65 Ibid., xxxv. Stephenson and the BSC integrated SIS, SOE, censorship, codes and ciphers, security, communications and controlled all these functions in the Western Hemisphere.

66 *BSC*, xxviii.

67 David Stafford, *Camp X* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys Publishers, 1986), 28.

68 Donovan earned the title "Wild Bill" as a result of aggressive command of the "Fighting 69th." Although a Republican, he was also close friends with the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson and the Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox. *BSC*, 39.

69 *BSC*, 16-17.

70 *BSC*, xxxii & 55.

71 "A Short History of SOE Activities in the USA and Latin America." National Archives (NA), HS7/79, File SOE History 46, SOE Activities in USA and Latin America, 1940-1944.

72 *BSC*, 241.

73 Ibid., xxvi & 239.

74 Ibid., 243-252.

75 Ibid., 163-165.

76 Ibid., 20 & 59-65.

77 Macdonald, *The True Intrepid,* 82.

78 *BSC*, 66-87; and Macdonald, *The True Intrepid,* 83.

79 Macdonald, *The True Intrepid*, 83. This ploy backfired. The rally was poorly attended so those who arrived with the phony tickets hoping to create a ruckus were simply shown to their seats. Their presence simply filled seats that would have gone empty giving the appearance of a larger body of supporters than actually existed.

80 *BSC*, 193-198, 204-208 and 214-216; and Macdonald, *The True Intrepid,* 183-184. Later, posing as a journalist, she infiltrated the Vichy French Embassy and obtained copies of secret correspondence and the French naval ciphers.

81 "A Short History of SOE Activities in the USA and Latin America." NA, HS7/79, File SOE History 46, SOE Activities in USA and Latin America, 1940-1944. See also *BSC*, 407-416.

82 "A Short History of SOE Activities in the USA and Latin America."

83 Ibid. See also *BSC,* 59-60.

84 *BSC*, 153-155.

85 "A Short History of SOE Activities in the USA and Latin America." See also *BSC*, 55-57 & 143-151.

86 The German declaration of war was based on their perspective of American violation of its neutrality, as well as its alliance with Japan. There was some merit to their accusation. On 11 September 1941, the President had publicly ordered the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force to shoot on sight any German war vessel. He reiterated this policy publicly once again on 27 October 1941. "German Declaration of War with the United States, 11 December 1941," internet; http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/gerdec41.asp, accessed 3 January 2014.

87 South America," 15 May 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

88 *BSC*, 253.

89 "Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff on 16th June, 1942," COS (42) 180th Meeting. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

90 "Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff on 16th June, 1942," COS (42) 180th Meeting. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

91 "Interview with the American ambassador," 5th May 1942. NA, FO 371, File 1942 - General - File No. 56.

92 Cited in *BSC*, 257.

93 "Memorandum," 27 March 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

94 "SOE/New York - Activities of GP, GO1, and GO3 Sections," 22 November 1944; and "Outline of SOE Activities in USA and Latin America." NA, HS7/79, File SOE History 46, "SOE Activities in USA and Latin America, 1940-1944"; and *BSC*, 276.

95 "Memorandum by SOE on Axis Penetration in South and Central America," 1 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56. The report added, "The [US] State Department considers that their 'good neighbour policy,' combined with economic pressure, can secure all that the Allies require. For this reason, United States action is confined to the activities of the FBI, which is a branch of the State Department concerned with secret intelligence. Colonel Donovan's organisation, which includes the American counterpart of SOE, with whom we work in close and most friendly cooperation in other parts of the world, is not at present allowed to operate in South America, although this decision may be reconsidered in the near future."

96 "COS (42) 180th Meeting, Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff on 16th June 1942 - Meeting with Colonel Donovan." NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56. *BSC*, 276.

97 "South America," 15 May 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

98 Telegraph, Sir N. Charles, No. 326, "From Rio De Janeiro to Foreign Office," 21 March 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

99 "South America - Appendix," 15 May 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56; and "Memorandum by SOE on Axis Penetration in South and Central America - Annex A," 1 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

100 "Memorandum by SOE on Axis Penetration in South and Central America - Annex A," 1 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

101 "Memorandum by SOE on Axis Penetration in South and Central America - Annex A," 1 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

102 Telegraph, Mr. Bateman, No. 104, "From Mexico to Foreign Office," 23 March 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

103 Telegraph, Mr. Brickell, No. 11, "From Asuncion to Foreign Office," 28 March 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

104 "Memorandum by SOE on Axis Penetration in South and Central America - Annex A," 1 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

105 "South America - Appendix," 15 May 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56; and "Memorandum by SOE on Axis Penetration in South and Central America - Annex A," 1 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

106 "Memorandum by SOE on Axis Penetration in South and Central America," 1 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

107 "SOE/New York - Activities of GP, GO1, and GO3 Sections," 22 November 1944; and "Outline of SOE Activities in USA and Latin America." NA, HS7/79, File SOE History 46, SOE Activities in USA and Latin America, 1940-1944. See also *BSC*, 288-342.

108 "SOE/New York - Activities of GP, GO1, and GO3 Sections," 22 November 1944; and "Outline of SOE Activities in USA and Latin America." NA, HS7/79, File SOE History 46, SOE Activities in USA and Latin America, 1940-1944.

109 Ibid.

110 Ibid.

111 Report, "SOE in S. America," 16 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

112 Minute, "Mr. O Scott," 25 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

113 Minute, "Proposed SOE Activities in Latin America," 24 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

114 Ibid.

115 Report, "SOE in S. America," 16 April 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

116 Letter, "Personal and Secret," 28 March 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

117 "Special Meeting held in Board Room, 64 Baker Street at 1700 hours on 18th August 1944." NA, HS 6/260. SOE Files, Belgium No. 228.

118 Letter, CD to Cadogan, CD/3983, 17 December 1942. NA, FO 371/30501, File - 1942, General File No. 56.

119 Cited in Howarth, *Undercover,* 312.

120 Cited in Ibid., 312.

121 Cited in Macdonald, *The True Intrepid*, 92-93.

122 *BSC*, 343.

123 *BSC*, xxxvi.

124 M.R.D. Foot, "What use was SOE?" Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), February 2003, 79.

125 *BSC*, 11 & 31-32.

CHAPTER 3

126 For example, see Norman Friedman, *Terrorism, Afghanistan, and America's New Way of War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003), especially 108-135.

127 Richard Andres, Craig Wills, and Thomas Griffith, Jr. "Winning with Allies: The Strategic Value of the Afghan Model," *International Security* Vol. 30, No. 3 (Winter 2005): 124-160.

128 Cited in "Aircraft and the War," *Flight*, No. 312, 6:51 (18 December 1914): 1217.

129 J.W. Woodhouse, "Special Duty Flight," *Cross and Cockade*, 2:2 (1971): 62.

130 John Maclaren, "Spies from the Skies," *Cross and Cockade* 29:4 (1998): 228.

131 Jacques Mortane, *Special Missions of the Air: An Exposition of Some of the Mysteries of Aerial Warfare* (London: The Aeroplane & General Publishing Co., Ltd., 1919), 48-56.

132 Czechoslovak Republic Ministry of National Defence, "Re: Results of Air-raid Bomb Operation on the Skoda-Works at Plzen—Report," 30 April 1942, HS 4/35 and Most Secret, Selbourne to Sinclair, P/6866/123, 1 December 1942, HS 4/35. The Halifax Mk V carrying the IRIDIUM team was shot down over Munich on 15 March 1943. K.A. Merrick, *Flights of the Forgotten: Special Duties Operations in World War Two* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1989), 77; and Roy Tebbutt, "Aircraft lost on Allied Force's Special Duty Operations & Associated Roll of Honour," Carpetbagger Aviation Museum, 65, internet; http://www.harringtonmuseum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Aircraft-lost-on-Allied-Forces-Special-Duty-Operations.pdf, accessed 18 December 2020.

133 From RAYMOND, "Bombardment of the Marchal Factory at Portes les Valences," 29 May 1944, NA, RG 226, Box 285, Folder 4109; Downey to Glavin through Gamble and de Piolenc, "Subject: Beautyrest," Headquarters, 2677 Headquarters Company OSS, 17 May 1944, 2. NA, RG 226, Box 269, Folder 978; and 104 Squadron Operations Record Book, Mission and Aircraft Entries for 9 May 1944. NA, AIR 27/822.

134 For details, see L. Douglas Keeney, *The Pointblank Directive: Three Generals and the Untold Story of the Daring Plan that Saved D-Day* (London, UK: Osprey, 2012).

135 Lindsay Dodd and Andrew Knapp, "'How many Frenchmen did you kill?' British bombing policy towards France (1940-1945)" *French History* 22:4 (2008): 469-492.

136 M.R.D. Foot, *S.O.E. in France: An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations in France, 1940-1944* (London, UK: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1966), 287; and William Mackenzie, *The Secret History of S.O.E.: Special Operations Executive, 1940-1945* (London, UK: St. Ermin's Press, 2000), 601.

137 Prior to 1999, the existing narratives of Rée's contribution specifically and *Blackmail* in general were limited to the short summary contained in a page-and-a-half in M.R.D. Foot's *SOE in France* and the highly imaginative narratives by Maurice Buckmaster and E.H. Cookridge. See Maurice Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone: The Story of British Agents in France* (New York: Norton, 1958), Chapter 8, Blackmail and E.H. Cookridge, *Inside S.O.E.: The Story of Special Operations in Western Europe, 1940-1945* (London: Arthur Barker, 1966), 186-193. Cookridge's account was retitled *Set Europe Ablaze* when in was published in the United States the following year.

138 Henri Raymond, "Experiences of an SOE Agent in France," in Michael Elliott-Bateman, ed., *The Fourth Dimension of War, Volume 1: Intelligence/Subversion/Resistance* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1970), 118.

139 Raymond, "Experiences of an SOE Agent in France," 121.

140 Rée's credentials were established via a message broadcast by radio on the British Broadcasting Company. Subsequently Rodolphe Peugeot advanced Rée 50,000 Francs, or some £166. "Messieurs Jean-Pierre and Rodolphe PEUGEOT," 22 May 1946, NA, HS 9/1178/3029.

141 Raymond, "Experiences of an SOE Agent in France," 121.

142 Captain Harry Alfred REE, D.S.O. Commendation, June 14, 1945, NA, HS 9/1240/3.

143 Raymond, "Experiences of an SOE Agent in France," 121.

144 Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, 600.

145 Message from MG/TGT to F, 24 Mar 1944, NA, HS6/343, Frame 102; Foot, *SOE in France*, 379.

146 "RF Section History, 1943-1944," (undated), NA, HS 7/124, 20.

147 Edgar Schein, "Coming to a New Awareness of Organizational Culture," *The MIT Sloan anagement Review* 25:2 (Winter 1984), internet; https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/coming-to-a-new-awareness-of-organizational-culture/, accessed 29 December 2020.

148 See for example M.R.D. Foot's apportionment of blame and reasons for the failure of SOE operations in the Netherlands over a 15-month period from 1942-1944. Foot, *S.O.E. in the Low Countries* (London, UK: St. Ermin's Press, 2001), 190-194.

149 Alexander S. Cochran, Robert C. Ehrhart, and John F. Kreis, "The Tools of Air Intelligence: ULTRA, MAGIC, Photographic Assessment, and the Y-Service," in John F. Kreis, ed., *Piercing the Fog: Intelligence and Army Air Forces Operations in World War II* (Washington, DC: Air Force History & Museums Program, 1996), 90-91.

150 LIF/F/1354," 18 December 1943, NA, HS 6/343, Frame 307.

151 Although other photographs sent from agents are available, those taken by Rée's contacts at Sochaux are missing. They were originally numbered as SOE HQ 235 Volume 2 but are listed as "NOT ON FILE" in the current file: NA, HS 8/427 (Industrial Demolitions Part III [continued]).

152 Foot, *SOE in France*, 284

153 "Michelin Rubber Factory at Clermont Ferrand," 22 December 1943, NA, HS 6/343, Frame 297.

154 "Source assessment of attack on Le Creusot, Sabotage vs. Bombing, and the Maquis," 15 January 1944, NA, HS 6/343, Frames 216-218.

155 HRS/485, "Michelin Rubber Factory, CLERMONT FERRAND," 31 Jan 1944, NA, HS6/343, Frame 172.

156 United States Strategic Bombing Survey, *Michelin Tire Factory, Clermont Ferrand, France*, Physical Damage Division Report No. 146 (Washington, DC: USSBS, 1947).

157 For an appreciation of the scale of Triangle's task, see the technical appreciation contained in "Blackmail Targets: Ste. d'Electro-chimie (sic) d'Electrometallurgie et des Acieries Electriques d'Ugine, Ugine," 4 March 1944, NA, HS6/343, Frames 133-135.

158 "Blackmail: S.O.E. Sabotage of R.A.F. Targets," 26 January 1944, NA, HS6/343, Frames 178-179.

159 "CMS. 328/DCAS," 4 December 1943, NA, HS6/343, Frame 338.

160 United States Army Special Operations Command, *ARSOF 2022, Part 1* (Fort Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command, April 2013), 10-16; Charles T. Cleveland and Daniel Egel, *The American Way of Irregular War: An Analytic Memoir,* RAND Report PE-A30101 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020), internet; https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA301-1.html, accessed 29 December 2020.

CHAPTER 4

161 William Mackenzie, *The Secret History of S.O.E.: Special Operations Executive, 1940-1945* (London, UK: St. Ermin's Press, 2000), 655.

162 David Stafford, *Churchill and Secret Service* (London, UK: Abacus Books, 2000), 298.

163 For more on Wells' work and its influence, see David Seed, "H.G. Wells and the Liberating Atom," *Science Fiction Studies* Vol. 30, No. 1 (2003): 33-48, internet; http://www.jstor.org/stable/4241139, accessed 18 December 2020.

164 J.F.C. Fuller, *The Reformation of War* (London, UK: Hutchinson & Co., 1923), 169.

165 F.G. Brickwedde, "Harold Urey and the discovery of deuterium," internet; https://doi.org/10.1063/1.2915259, accessed 18 December 2020.

166 One of the challenges in researching Operation Gunnerside is the range of names used to identify the raid. These include Vermork (hydroelectric plant name), Norsk Hydro (the company that built and ran the plants), Rjuken (nearby town), Telemark (the region). For reader ease, this chapter uses Norsk Hydro for both the company and the heavy water plant annex.

167 Dan Kurzman, *Blood and Water: Sabotaging Hitler's Bomb* (New York, NY: Henry Holt, 1997), 56.

168 Norsk Hydro, "1928: Proximity to the Market," internet; https://www.hydro.com/en/about-hydro/company-history/1918---1928/1928-proximity-to-the-market/, accessed 18 December 2020.

169 Bernard Kroener, Rolf-Dieter Muller, and Hans Umbreit, *Germany and the Second World War, Volume V: Organization and Mobilization of the German Sphere of Power, Part 2: Wartime administration, economy, and manpower resources 1942-1944/5.* Translated by Derry Cook-Radmore, Ewald Osers, Barry Smerin, and Barbara Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), 787

170 For example, see F.H. Hinsley, E.E. Thomas, C.A.G. Simkins, and C.F.G. Ransom, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume 3, Part 2* (London, UK: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1988), 583-592.

171 For details, see Jeffrey T. Richelson, *Spying on the Bomb: American Nuclear Intelligence from Nazi Germany to Iran and North Korea* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), Chapter 1.

172 Winston Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate* (Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin, 1953), 374-382.

173 Kurzman, *Blood and Water,* 17.

174 Of the four B-17s dispatched to bomb the German battleship *Admiral Scheer* in Oslo harbor, only one safely landed. Martin Middlebrook and Chris Everitt, *The Bomber Command War Diaries: An Operational Reference Book, 1939-1945* (New York, NY: Viking, 1985), 201.

175 The most recent account of this action is Ken Ford, *Operation Archery: The Commandos and the Vaagso Raid,1941* (London, UK: Osprey, 2011).

176 One of the Grouse team members, Claus Helberg, wrote up a short summary of his experiences landing with Grouse, preparing for Operation Freshman, and later linking up and working with the members of Operation Gunnerside during the attack. Helberg, "The Vemork Action: A Classic Act of Sabotage," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (1992): 81-90.

177 Mackenzie, *The Secret History of S.O.E.*, 657.

178 The unsavory details of the treatment of the crash survivors of Operation Freshman are recounted in Kurzman, *Blood and Water,* 100-109. Kurzman suggests Freshman prisoners held at Grini concentration camp confirmed their target. Ibid., 108. The official German history laconically states "all the British were shot without having first been interrogated." Kroener, Muller, and Umbreit, *Germany and the Second World War, Volume V: Organization and Mobilization of the German Sphere of Power, Part 2*, 794.

179 Helberg, "The Vemork Action," 84.

180 Kurzman, *Blood and Water,* 57-59. For inexplicable reasons, Kurzman identifies first cod liver then castor oil in his three-page narrative of Brun's sabotage. Other sources just mention "vegetable oil."

181 Kroener, Muller, and Umbreit, *Germany and the Second World War, Volume V: Organization and Mobilization of the German Sphere of Power, Part 2*, 794.

182 Thomas Gallagher, *Assault in Norway: The True Story of the Telemark Raid* (London, UK: Macdonald & Jane's, 1975), 53.

183 Kurzman, *Blood and Water*, 111-113.

184 The training system developed by SOE, including outlines of individual lessons taught to teams such as those used for Operations Grouse and Gunnerside, is collated and publicly available in Public Record Office, *SOE Syllabus: Lessons in Ungentlemanly Warfare, World War II* (Richmond, Surrey, UK: Public Record Office, 2001).

185 Gallagher, *Assault in Norway*, p. 55.

186 Ibid., 37-42.

187 Ibid., 57.

188 An excellent source for specific details on the drop is Charles Cruickshank, *S.O.E. in Scandinavia* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1986), 199.

189 Each team member voted on the proposal. While this form of egalitarian planning and voting is common in a number of special operations units, the tradition continues very strongly in Norwegian special operations forces, including its frogmen. For details of the social dynamics and its process, see Tone Danielson, *Making Warriors in a Global Era: An Ethnographic Study of Norwegian Naval Special Operations Command* (London, UK: Lexington Books, 2018), 148-163.

190 Cruickshank, *S.O.E. in Scandinavia*, 200.

191 Gallagher, *Assault in Norway*, 139.

192 Kurzman, *Blood and Water*, 162. How much heavy water was destroyed presents the researcher with a wild range of figures. On the lower end of the scale, Thomas Powers claims 350 kilograms, or 771 pounds. Thomas Powers, *Heisenberg's War: The Secret History of the German Bomb* (London, UK: Jonathan Cape, 1993), 201. An official historian of the SOE, Charles Cruikshank, claims 3,000 pounds or some 1,360 kilograms. Cruikshank, *S.O.E. in Scandinavia,* 200.

193 Gallagher, *Assault in Norway,* 168-169. For Haukelid's own account, see *Skis Against the Atom,* rev. ed. (Minot, ND: North American Heritage Press, 1989), 161-172.

194 Gallagher, *Assault in Norway*, 204.

195 Thomas Powers, *Heisenberg's War: The Secret History of the German Bomb* (London, UK: Jonathan Cape, 1993), 201-202.

196 Gallagher, *Assault in Norway*, 203-204.

197 An exhaustively detailed treatment of the mission is Michael Hill, *Black Sunday: Ploesti* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 1993).

198 Gallagher, *Assault in Norway*, 204; and Powers, *Heisenberg's War*, 211-212.

199 Kit Carter and Robert Mueller, *Combat Chronology of the U.S. Army Air Forces, 1941-1945.* (Washington, DC: Center for Air Force History, 1991), internet; https://media.defense.gov/2010/May/25/2001330283/-1/-1/0/AFD-100525-035.pdf, accessed 28 December 2020. Specific details from the chronology regarding the Rjukan mission are available in the following text file: http://paul.rutgers.edu/~mcgrew/wwii/usaf/html/Nov.43.html, accessed 28 December 2020.

200 Gallagher provides a sympathetic view from the ground and highlights the specific casualties while the official German history states laconically, and misleadingly, that the Allies' "Flying Fortresses destroyed the Vemork plant and the town of Rjukan itself" in stressing the impact the raid had on German calculations about the importance of heavy water. Gallagher, *Assault in Norway*, 205-207; Kroener, Muller, and Umbreit, *Germany and the Second World War, Volume V: Organization and Mobilization of the German Sphere of Power, Part 2*, 796.

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219 The pact was initially drafted as a tripartite military alliance between Japan, Italy and Germany. Japan insisted the focus be aimed at the Soviet Union, however, Italy and Germany wanted it aimed at the British Empire and France. This disagreement resulted in the pact

being signed without Japan. As such, it became an agreement between Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. However, in September 1940, the Pact of Steel became the Tripartite Pact, when Japan signed on, thus, making up the third constituent of the triad.

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223 *Ciano Diaries*, 24 May 1939. Loc 2329.

224 *Ciano Diaries,* Loc 1645, 2347, 6085. Ciano also disclosed, "he [Mussolini] detests the King 'because the King is the only defeatist in the country.'" Ibid., Loc 6094, 9947.

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227 Max Hastings, *All Hell Let Loose. The World At War 1939-1945* (London: William Collins, 2012), 3.

228 *Ciano Diaries*, 25 October 1939, Loc 3728.

229 *Ciano Diaries*, Loc 4546.

230 *Ciano Diaries*, Loc 4661, 4705, 4722 and 4741. Mussolini later described the Italian people as "a whore who prefers the winning mate." Ibid., 10 April 1940, Loc 4944.

231 *The Ciano Diaries*, loc 4965. Although Ciano was Mussolini's son-in-law, the Duce still had Ciano shot by firing squad in 1943 for his part in the coup to oust the dictator.

232 *Ciano Diaries*, Loc 1628.

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235 Hastings, *All Hell Let Loose*, 73. Field Marshal Werner von Blomberg's retort when asked who would win the next war stated, "I cannot tell you that. Only one thing I can say: whoever has Italy on his side is bound to lose." Cited in ibid., 105.

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"In eight weeks our losses amounted to two killed and four wounded out of four thousand men. Notwithstanding that, the surrender took place with full honors." *Ciano Diaries*, 16 July 1941, Loc 7486.

240 Albrecht Kesselring, *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Kesselring* (London: Greenhill Books, 1997), 167.

241 Kesselring, *The Memoirs,* 157. Marshal Count Ugo Cavallero was Chief of the *Comando Supremo* from December 1940-February 1943. Mussolini dismissed him after the Allies ousted the Axis forces from North Africa. Badoglio arrested Cavallero after the dismissal of Mussolini, however, the Germans released him after the armistice. He apparently committed suicide after refusing to fight on the side of the Germans.

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247 Kesselring, *The Memoirs*, 172.

248 General Ambrosio assisted with the ousting of Mussolini. On 9 September 1943 he fled Rome prior to German occupation. He was subsequently appointed minister of war in Badoglio's government.

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251 Bernard Law Montgomery, *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Montgomery of Alamein, K.G.* (Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military (Kindle Edition), 2007), Loc 3518.

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253 Cited in Nigel Hamilton, *Master of the Battlefield. Monty's War Years 1942-1944* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1983), 403-404.

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268 Membership included Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States. SEATO was disbanded on 30 June 1977.

269 The advent of intercontinental missiles in the late 1950s added a new dimension to the Cold War. Manned bombers were no longer the only means of delivering nuclear payloads. As such, both super-powers began to deploy missiles around the world. The Soviet attempt to establish missile based in Cuba in 1962 led to the Cuban Missile Crisis that placed the world on the brink of Armageddon. Faced with a U.S. naval embargo and ultimatum, the Soviets eventually dismantled the missiles and returned them to the Soviet Union.

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277 Matty Edwards, "The Shot that launched a battle of generations," *The Local*, 4 June 2015, internet; https://www.thelocal.de/20150604/benno-ohnesorg-1967-student-protests-rudi-dutschke-baader-meinhof, accessed 21 March 2020.

278 In an interview in 2007, he defended his action of using lethal force against Ohnesorg. He explained that Ohnesorg attacked him. As a result, he defended himself. "Anyone who attacks me," he asserted, "is destroyed. Off. Lights out. That is how you must see that."

279 Edwards, "The Shot that launched...."

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281 Ibid. Scholars attribute the move to a more progressive Germany in the aftermath of the shooting because Ohnesorg's death influenced many future German politicians who were in their teens and twenties at the time. A monument designed by Austrian sculptor Alfred Hrdlicka was positioned next to the Deutsche Oper Berlin as a memorial for the killing. In December 2008, municipal authorities inaugurated an official memorial panel on the sidewalk in front of the house where Ohnesorg was shot. In Hanover, which was Ohnesorg's hometown, a bridge over the Ihme River is named after him.

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285 Ibid. Dutschke advocated radical action that might include illegality and violence if necessary. However, his first proposed action was a peaceful sit-down strike. Nonetheless, Dutschke's intransigence towards renouncing violence led others in the movement to characterize his ideology as left fascism.

286 His disparagement of the media was not without foundation. The Axel Springer group included influential publications such as *Bild, Die Welt* and *Berliner Zeitung*. Together they controlled 31 percent of the national daily market, as well as 89 percent of the regional and 85 percent of the Sunday newspapers. Initially, the killing of Ohnesorg was totally ignored in their coverage. Only days later did the Bild acknowledge the shooting by describing him as a "victim of the riots." The Springer media depicted the students as "instigators, hooligans and rioters." The Springer media also dubbed him "Red Rudi." Not surprisingly Dutschke became the face of the movement in 1967-1968. By the beginning of 1968, the mainstream media began to subtly incite readers to lash out against Dutschke and his student movement. For example, an article in the *Bild* was entitled, "Stop the terror of the young reds now!" It identified Dutschke as the leader and incredibly pondered that the public did not need to simply leave the "dirty-work" to the police. Predictably, on 11 April 1968, someone took the suggestion to heart. Josef Bachmann, a right wing *Bild* subscriber tracked down Dutschke,

called him a "dirty communist pig" and shot him three times in broad daylight. Although Dutschke survived the assault, he had to relearn how to speak, read and write. Moreover, he died 12 years later from health complications related to his injuries. Similar to the shooting of Ohnesorg, the attempted assassination of Dutschke further radicalized the movement. In 1970, and a number of members went on to create the Red Army Faction terrorist group. Edwards, "The Shot that launched a battle of generations."

287 The KGB Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti, (Committee for State Security) or secretpolice, maintained liaison officers with the Stasi until 1990. Collaboration was so close that the KGB allowed the MfS to establish operational bases in Moscow and Leningrad to monitor East German tourists visiting the Soviet Union.

288 In 2009, it was revealed that Kurras had also committed espionage for the MfS during the 1950s and 1960s. However, due to the publicity of the trials, the Stasi cut its ties to him. Investigators estimate that at the time of regime collapse the MfS had 175,00 informal collaborators. "1968: Berlin student unrest worsens," BBC On This Day, 14 April, internet; http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/14/newsid_2524000/2524577.stm, accessed 21 March 2020.

289 Apparently Kurras approached the East German Communist regime in 1955. He wanted to defect. However, his handlers convinced him to stay in West Berlin and work as a spy for the Stasi. As a result, he delivered confidential information on the West Berlin police. In 1964, he secretly became a member of East Germany's ruling Socialist Unity Party. After acquittals for his shooting of Ohnesorg, Kurras rejoined the police force in 1971 and was subsequently promoted to detective chief inspector. He retired from the Berlin Police Force in 1987. He died on 16 December 2014 in Berlin.

290 As the Soviet Union and its satellites began to dissolve in 1989 during the "Peaceful Revolution," Stasi offices and prisons throughout the country were occupied by citizens. However, the Stasi staff managed to destroy a number of documents before the occupations took place. Stasi staff destroyed files and documents they held, by manually tearing them up, burning them or shredding them. When this destruction was discovered a massive protest on 15 January 1990 formed in front of the Stasi headquarters calling for a halt to the destruction of the files. The protest grew to the point that the protesters were able to overcome the police and gain entry into the complex. Predictably, among the protesters were former Stasi collaborators seeking to destroy incriminating documents.

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CHAPTER 8

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CHAPTER 15

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STRATEGIC SABOTAGE

Defined as destructive or obstructive military, paramilitary, economic, informational and political actions carried out by a nation's agent or proxy to hinder an opponent's political objective(s) or to further one's own, it has historically been an effective tool to achieve national objectives. However, in the era of renewed Great Power Competition, strategic sabotage, particularly as a result of advancements in computing and informational technologies, as well as globalization, has taken on an even greater role in thwarting adversaries and advancing a state's interests. This volume examines a number of historical cases of strategic sabotage, both failures and successes, and draws relevant observations on its application.

VIAM INVENIEMUS
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